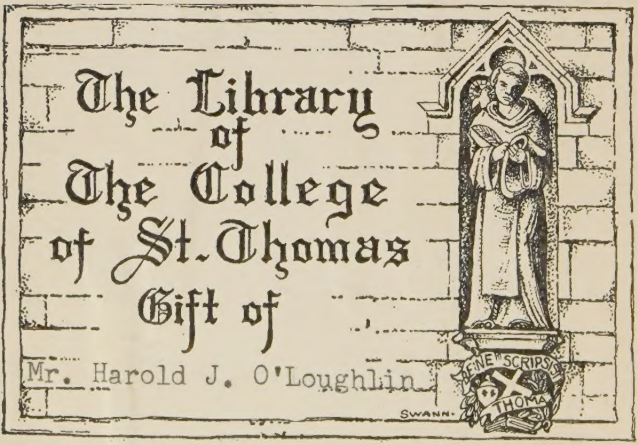
3 0516 [redacted] 5233

SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR

RUSSELL H. CONWELL

COLLEGE OF ST. THOMAS LIBRARY
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

WITHDRAWN
UST
Libraries



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/howsoldiermaysuc0000russ

HOW A SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR

Books by
RUSSELL H. CONWELL

HOW A SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR or The Corporal with the Book

OBSERVATION: EVERY MAN HIS OWN UNIVERSITY.

ACRES OF DIAMONDS.

WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR WILL POWER

HARPER & BROTHERS
[Established 1817]

HOW A SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR

"The Corporal with the Book"

BY

RUSSELL H. CONWELL

Author of

"ACRES OF DIAMONDS" "WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR WILL POWER" ETC.

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK AND LONDON

How a Soldier May Succeed After the War

Copyright, 1918, by Harper & Brothers
Printed in the United States of America
Published July, 1918

F–S

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	Introduction	vii
I.	What the Soldier Can Do	1
II.	The Period of Opportunity	7
III.	Inventors in the Ranks	15
IV.	The Corporal's Book	20
V.	The Stretcher-bearer and His Book	31
VI.	The Negro and His Book	38
VII.	The Cavalryman and His Sums	47
VIII.	The Cook and His Studies	51
IX.	The Reporter and His Book	59
X.	The Prisoner and His Book	66
XI.	The Book and that Cigar	72
XII.	A Soldier and His Diary	81
XIII.	The Tent and the Kind Hand	89
XIV.	The Captain and the Great Book	95
XV.	Soldiers and the Presidency	101

INTRODUCTION

Russell H. Conwell is a worker who has never known idleness. He is a man who has always inspired. He has always been an achiever, and always he has shown others how to achieve.

When Russell H. Conwell proposes anything it is sure to be a quite feasible proposal, full of high advantages; although at first, to other men, it may seem so prohibitively difficult as to be impossible. But he never proposes the impossible. What he points out is always something that ought to be pointed out, and what he urges to be done is always something that ought to be done and can be done. And now he is pointing out that the army life of hundreds of thousands, or perhaps even millions, of our young men need not place a chasm between them and their civilian ambitions. He is urging that the many hours of leisure which come to even the busiest soldier be not frittered away. His idea is that our young Americans, whether in camps and garrisons at home or in the trenches or billets abroad, shall not waste the precious leisure hours of their soldier lives.

INTRODUCTION

Conwell was born three-quarters of a century ago on a hopelessly rocky hill farm of New England. By some miracle he achieved an education, but when the Civil War broke out he had not begun active preparation for a career. He had worked on a farm and had taught school. At eighteen he enlisted. At nineteen he was commissioned as captain. Before the war was over he was a colonel. He did not for a moment neglect his military duties But the long hours of leisure that come to even the most devoted soldier were occupied by him in study. He secured law-books and studied law. He promptly passed the examinations, after his discharge from the army, and he quickly became a successful lawyer.

He established a prosperous practice, but at the same time he made a special point of acting without pay for such as could not afford to pay him. And never, for poor or rich, did he take a case which he did not absolutely believe was right.

In the beginning of his career he inspired his schoolmates and his pupils. In the Civil War he inspired his men to devoted deeds. As a lawyer he inspired his clients to fair dealing. Always, from the beginning, he has been an inspirer; constantly, successfully an inspirer. And always he has led the way in good deeds and impossible acts; he is not of those who merely point out the way, but of those who both point and lead.

Called, as a lawyer, into the affairs of a little church which was about to be disbanded, in brave old Revo-

lutionary Lexington, he inspired the disheartened handful of people with new courage. He served for a while as lay preacher in their pulpit. He decided that, after all, his life-work ought to be that of a minister instead of a lawyer. And so he was ordained in that tiny church, and he accepted the pastorate at a salary of six hundred dollars a year, thus throwing away his successful lawyer's income.

Doubling the church membership and his own salary, he left the church, thus firmly set on its feet, and accepted the call of a struggling congregation in Philadelphia which could offer him but eight hundred dollars a year, instead of the twelve hundred which the Lexington church was now able to pay him.

Since then—that was thirty-five years ago—his success has been magical. He developed the struggling Philadelphia church into the splendidly flourishing Baptist Temple. He inspired his people to put up a building which holds more people than does any other Protestant church building in America. And, for his part, he fills it with an eager congregation twice every Sunday.

He founded Temple University, to meet the needs of young men and women who would not be afraid of work, whether work in the class-rooms or work outside, to pay for their tuition; and the university has already had on its rolls more than a hundred thousand students, who have gone into the world full of the inspiration with which, as the president and the very soul of the institution, Russell Conwell has filled them.

He founded a hospital and acquired control of another hospital, and his hospitals have cared for forty thousand patients, besides hundreds of thousands of dispensary cases.

As a lecturer, he has talked to many millions, and every individual of those millions has had ambition stirred and has felt the fire of inspiration.

As student, teacher, soldier, lawyer, author, minister, educator, lecturer, he has always been a man who inspires. It is a magical gift, and he possesses it. And now, having passed just beyond the three-quarters of a century mark, he desires to point out to our soldiers that they will have many an hour which may be used to priceless advantage, and he desires to inspire them to that priceless use.

By his sermons and by his lectures his hearers have always been uplifted, enheartened, quickened, aroused; they have been incited to perform the impossible; they have had their hopes made stronger; their ambitions have been awakened and strengthened and clarified. And so will it be with the soldier readers of this book, if they will but heed the message that he brings to them.

ROBERT SHACKLETON.

HOW A SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR

HOW A SOLDIER MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE WAR

CHAPTER I

WHAT THE SOLDIER CAN DO

HOW a Soldier May Succeed After the War has been prepared as a patriotic and Christian duty. It is not history. It is not a text-book of science. It is not a volume of statistics. It is a sincere heart message to "Our Boys" in the field, and every line is dictated by a paternal desire, on the part of one who has faced many of their problems and gone through many of their experiences, to suggest to them how to fit themselves or better themselves in preparation for the problems and opportunities which will follow the war. I would suggest to them how to make themselves ready, when the war shall be over, to take up business life or professional life with vigor, with readiness, with intelligence, and without having to consider as lost, from the business or professional

standpoint, the time spent in bearing arms. The war will instill a deeper sense of manliness, a profounder sense of patriotic duty; and it offers at the same time opportunities of practical preparation for future good-citizenship. The duties of soldiering need not interfere necessarily with the life-work of the men who are engaged in the high task of making the world safe for democracy. The day will come when our soldiers return to civil life; I want to show them how they may fit themselves for that day.

From the first, it must be understood that there is to be no interference with soldierly duties. Camping, marching, fighting, attention to discipline and orders, doing in every respect what a good soldier ought to do, neglecting nothing soldierly, striving always to improve and advance in things soldierly—all these things mark the first duty of the man in uniform: his first and vital duty is to the Flag.

But, secondly, it should be realized that there are many hours not directly connected with a soldier's work. There are many intervals of leisure during which soldiers are at liberty to occupy themselves as they choose. They may waste these hours, they may lose these hours, they may fritter away these hours, or they may use these hours to the advantage of their great life-work, along whatever lines they may plan it to be.

Millions of men, and mostly young men, are having their business and professional careers interrupted. By far the greater number will return home, un-

wounded or recovered from wounds; and then will come the test as to whether they are prepared or unprepared to take their place in the world and put their feet firmly on the ladder-rounds of advancement. With desire and determination, they can be prepared. Without the desire and the determination, they will be unprepared. And the road to success is through the reading of good books.

The young man who has obeyed the call to the Colors, at the very beginning of his career; the older man, established, trained, vigorous in mind as in body —both alike face months or years that are to stand for loss or gain. And the decision comes through the use and choice of books.

In the first place, it must be understood that there will be plenty of time for reading and for study. There is too much of a feeling that the soldiers are to be so engaged in fighting that books can never be read. And, indeed, while the men stand on guard in the trenches, looking out over No Man's Land for the first sign of attack; and while they load and fire in clouds of battle smoke or sweep Over the Top in a bayonet charge—at such times, indeed, there is no leisure for books! Nor is there to be time for books in the great marches, or in the shifts of forces from point to point in crowded vans. But there will be long hours when the men are not fighting or marching or standing on guard. And I say this not merely as my own opinion, although I could claim a right to speak from the fact that I myself fought under

the Flag for years. But conditions might radically have changed with the new system of warfare, and so I am glad to be able to say it on the authority of the military authorities themselves.

Under the general oversight of the Library of Congress, acting under the eye of the War Department and with its concurrence, books are being sent abroad to the soldiers. As I write, the total of books gathered, and already sent or to be sent, totals over three million volumes. Three million books already gathered for our soldiers, and vast numbers more to come!

As the Library of Congress, in a bulletin, points out, this makes a total of books exceeding that of the volumes in its own enormous national library, and more than twice the total of books in the Public Library of New York. These books already gathered for the soldiers, declares the bulletin, if piled together in a single column, would reach to a height 625 times that of the Washington Monument! And it adds that the books will help to "make better soldiers out of the men and better men out of the soldiers."

With this vast number of books there must be vast variety in character. There will be strong and sturdy books, inspiring books, books that instruct and improve, books of general literature, books of history and biography, books of science; and there will also be many books of no real value at all, books that merely give ephemeral amusement or which do not even accomplish that pleasant aim.

From the first the soldier must face the question of choice, he must be discriminating. And there will be full opportunities for choice and discrimination. Through the various agencies that are to handle the books, application can be made for desired books that are not immediately available; and the intention is to make it possible for the soldiers to have their every need supplied. And always, of course, there is the chance of procuring, for oneself, through booksellers or the members of one's family, special books that are specially needed.

In all this I am not merely thinking of reading to pass the time; I have in mind that definite reading and definite study which make for permanent mental gain. To read, and to read lazily, and to read books that are not worth while, would not in itself be of any helpfulness; instead, it would mean mental deterioration.

What I have in mind is such reading and such study as will mean splendid preparation for life-work after the war; and I feel it as a matter of solemn importance, not only to the individuals, but to the nation itself, through the advance or the retrogradation of these millions of individuals. A nation which goes to war with its entire manhood is vitally concerned in the improvement or impairment of this same manhood. And the men are going to be made better or they are going to be made worse in their ideals of civil life and in their ability to face the problems of civil life.

I have seen it stated that, judging from the example of the English soldiers who have had large numbers of books sent them, the taste of the men will be for fiction, and that, therefore, practically nothing else should be sent them.

But that would be a great mistake. I do not wish to condemn fiction, in itself, for there are many excellent works of fiction, and there is a definite good which comes from legitimate and intelligent amusement.

But to flood the camps with stories merely because there is a natural call for amusement, and to forget the tremendous importance of lost time, would be very bad policy.

Because young men or even older men want something is not always a good reason for giving it to them. To want what they want when they want it may be all right enough along some lines, but in serious matters, such as preparation for the future, it should be pointed out to them that it is what they ought to want, not merely what they want, that they ought to seek, and seek diligently.

How a Soldier May Succeed After the War is not written in a didactic spirit. It is not a mere theoretic volume, pointing out helpful possibilities. It is a book based upon that best of all arguments—facts; for it is based upon the writer's personal knowledge of what soldiers, by study while in service, have actually achieved.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF OPPORTUNITY

THE greatest writers, composers, and publishers in the history of American literature appeared during the Civil War and flourished for a quarter of a century afterward. It was the Elizabethan Age of America. Orators unexcelled by the ancients arose in many parts of the country. Poets sang with the beauty and fervor of the Latin Age. Musical composers of ability made vocal the halls, homes, and streets. It was an era of intellectual achievement which may be excelled only by another war for liberty. It is not reasonable to suppose that Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Gough, Livermore, Fields, or Riley were superhuman. The great statesmen like Lincoln, Sumner, Stevens, Gordon, and the great generals like Lee and Grant, Sheridan and Longstreet, or the great editors like Greeley, Watterson, and Dana, were all exceptional in learning or mental strength. Their gifts were especially developed and encouraged by their environment.

There must be just as great men now living whose

names and ability have not been used or known, and it must be that this war will call many men and women into fame who in time of peace would never have been recognized. War furnishes varied and exciting occasions for deep thought and brings out many of the worst and best traits of humanity.

The movements of great armies, the awakening of millions of people, the enormous armaments on sea and land, the mighty ordnance, the air squadrons in the sky, the horrid assassins under the sea, the awful devastations, the graves, the hospitals, the nurses, the ammunition-trains, the fears of defeat, the delirium of victory—all call for description and expression in unusually exalted terms. The prayer of the dying soldier, the song of the homesick laddies, the letters from home, the groans of the wounded, the angelic ministrations of woman's hand beside the blood-stained stretcher, the pouring unstintedly forth of uncounted millions of money, the building of great fleets almost in a day, the cries of orphans, the tears of widows, the moans of exiles, the crash of martial music, the earthquake shocks of heavy artillery, the breaking of home ties, the anxious hearts kneeling to pray for the absent ones, the great changes in domestic and public life, the sacrifices of young and old for their country's flag, the wonderful acts of heroism, the martyrs steadfast to their death, the close union of hearts and creeds, the knowledge of other lands and people, the closer relations of all nations, the spirit of benevolence, and the mighty anthems in which

whole armies worship God — these great facts awaken the muses of the poets, give liberty of speech to the orator, sing new oratorios to the musician, and hurry the pen of the author through sublime and enduring compositions. Then human nature reaches its highest and best form. At such a time genius is free.

When the soldiers came home from the Civil War books multiplied like leaves. The demand for books kept pace with the supply and led to the mighty benefactions of Carnegie, Rockefeller, Sage, and Vanderbilt. The war awakened new emotions and enlarged the old ones. It extended the views of life, and men found more occasions for joy, discovered more means for human achievement, and life grew larger and more intense. As when some cyclone breaks down the forest and lets in the sunshine, and a thousand varieties of vegetation appear which had been dormant for ages in the shade, so war gives life to the weak and fame to the unknown. It is an era for new things, a time for revolution and reform. Hence writers and orators find much to describe and experience the enthusiasm to do their best. Innovations create no fears, and the unexpected is expected. Eugene Field, James Whitcomb Riley, Joel Chandler Harris, Bob Burdette, Mark Twain, and Dwight L. Moody found that their brains and hearts were free. All doors were open. Great enterprises in railroads, manufacturing, oil producing, and mining poured out millions into the laps of the people. The poor man became suddenly rich,

foreign titled aristocrats eagerly sought the hands of American women. It was a period of changes, surprises, great emotions, great works, and great education.

But it is going to be still greater now, and the faithful, obedient, industrious private soldier who keeps his mind in training will come into his own. He will have his share of the world's good if he is prepared to take it. It will be free to all. Let him enter the promised land, as he can do if he have the right book in his hand and brain.

It is true that all America loves the soldier as it is true that all the world loves a lover. The heart of the American people is almost wholly engrossed in the task of helping the soldier. We point to him and say to all the world: "He is our messenger and our ideal. Look on him and see what our nation claims to be." But there are some very important things which the individual soldier must do for himself if he is fairly to represent our nation and reach the highest degree of individual success. He must think, and he must think right.

When the United States was forced into this great war to defend her citizens from assassination on the sea, the people at once took the high stand that they would not fight for selfish motives alone. They saw the opportunity to do as a nation for the whole world what the patriot would do for his country.

What a thrilling scene it is! One hundred millions of intelligent people with a single mind arise to defend

humanity from the powers of evil. What an unselfish, unheard-of stand America has taken! With unselfish and brave frankness, America has declared that she will give every dollar and every life to win a battle for other nations and other generations.

With America it is a war for the liberty and welfare of the human race, and each of our soldiers is the representative of this national ideal, and an exponent of this purpose. Patriotism has become a pure religion and each soldier is a worshiper. The soldier's character must be of the finest fiber, and his behavior will be an exhibition of high honor and an inflexible loyalty.

To be a soldier of America now is to be a noble sample of an intelligent, conscientious, powerful man; healthy and agile in body, clear in thought and pure in heart. Our nation bows low to such soldiers. They are our dearest treasure.

Therefore the American soldier of any rank to-day will strive to make the most of himself and will diligently seek to cultivate and strengthen his mind. He will look ahead, and while doing his duty daily with unflinching determination he will prepare himself not only for more usefulness in war, but for the highest possible service in the years after peace is declared.

To do this every man must use to the best advantage every means at hand. The rules for worthy success are generally the same for all occupations and for all races. Vigorous exercise of the body, mind, and soul

is a necessity to a full life. Wisdom, sagacity, wide views, powers of appreciation of the best, are gained by study and observation. Therefore the soldier must study and observe.

Good books, great books, helpful books, will always be within call. Time invested in books is money, honor, happiness, worship. But read only the best books. Read something which sets you thinking on some topic that is worth while.

It may be well worth your while to help some poor fellow to study who knows less than you do. Teachers learn more than their students. Teaching makes them more thorough and more comprehensive. The greatest linguist in Denver began to teach his children languages from books he had never studied himself. Helping another is always the best way to help oneself. Some of the very best teachers are those who themselves learned the lesson on the day before for the purpose of teaching it. The subject is then fresh and fascinating.

And so, always be on the watch to assist others as well as yourself. Help another soldier with his studies, be ready to encourage a companion, give a good book to some one who will probably be able to use it to advantage.

The union of Italy and America in this great war is largely the result of the timely gift of just the right book.

In 1849 Daniel Manin, the great statesman and hero of the Venetian Revolution of 1848, wrote to

John Griggs, of New York, an intimate friend of General Garibaldi, that the love of freedom and the desire to liberate Italy from the tyranny of Austria was first instilled into his (Manin's) heart by the gift of one book. The story is reproduced from the notes and diary of Consul-General Sparks of North Carolina, who was the official representative of the United States in Venice. From those notes the following is a quotation:

President Manin has been familiarly known as "the American," not only because of his insistence on an American Republic for Venice, but because of his enthusiastic admiration for everything American.

Manin told my clerk that he was employed for a while by an old sea-captain from Newport while the ship was discharging its cargo at Venice. He said that when the ship sailed the captain gave him a biography of George Washington as a souvenir, and he (Manin) learned English so as to read it.

The gift of that one book surprisingly shaped the destinies of the world and especially influenced the destinies of the oppressed people of Italy. The "Americani," founded by Manin to give to the oppressed people a love for American democracy, was a most powerful body in the revolution which finally made Italy a glorious nation and drove Austria back of the Adriatic. Probably the writer of that book never knew what a place it thus holds in the history of human freedom. The old sea-captain never realized

how his book had influenced the life of Manin, and through him had inspired Garibaldi, Cavour, Gavazzi, and Victor Emmanuel in establishing Italian freedom.

This story is not of the same class as the others that I am telling, but I insert it to show how helpfulness with books may lead to momentous results.

CHAPTER III

INVENTORS IN THE RANKS

ONE of the most remarkable results of the great Civil War was seen in the great number of inventions which were patented at its close. Many of them were invented by private soldiers who made their experiments or models in camp. What the number of those patents may be, if the list were complete, there seems to be no way now to ascertain. But an examination of the biographies of inventors reveals the fact that patents for improvements in many lines were issued to soldiers. The following is a partial list of the patents:

Baggage
Bandages and splints
Binding
Blackboards
Bookkeeping
Buckles
Buttons
Cans
Carpets
Carriages
Coal-mining
Combs
Cotton-ginning
Creameries
Cutlery
Dentistry
Drills
Dynamite
Electric power
Elevators
Engines
Express cars
Extracts
Farm machinery
Fertilizer
Fire-extinguishers

Fishing
Fruit syrups
Furniture
Gas
Gin cotton
Glass
Grist mills
Guns and gunpowder
Heating
Horse blankets
Hospital beds
Hotel registers
Lamps
Locks
Looms
Machinery
Mail-bags
Manufacturing of tin, iron, lead, paper, brick
Maple sugar apparatus
Matches
Mining
Mirrors
Musical instruments
Newspapers
Nickel-plating
Office desks
Organs
Paint
Paving
Pencils
Pens
Photography
Pianos
Pottery
Preserving meats
Printing
Printing machinery
Railroads
Refrigerators
Rolling-chairs
Roofing
Sanitary apparatus
Saws
Sewers
Shoes
Silver plate
Slaughtering
Steamboats
Stone-cutting
Stretchers
Sugar-refining
Surgical instruments
Tableware
Tailoring
Theater tickets
Thermometers
Toys
Trade-marks
Trunks
Typesetting
Ventilation
Voting-booths
Wall-paper
Weaving embroidery
Welding
Wheels
Wire-weaving
Wood-carving

It may be claimed that these inventions would have been made if we had remained at peace. But even if that were true—and no one can tell whether or not that is so—the important point is overlooked in any such statement. The important point is that in spite of the distractions and occupations of war-time ser-

vice so many brilliant men found time to use their minds thus brilliantly. Earnest men thought and planned earnestly in their hours of leisure, and the list that I have given shows in part what they did.

"Inventive geniuses" are not usually practical inventors. The greatest improvements have been made by men like Watts, Stephenson, Jacquard, or Howe, who gained their ends not by lightning flashes of magic power, but by persistent hard work and discouraging experiments. The most important improvements were the results of the fact that some man saw a need and endeavored sincerely to supply that need.

The soldier who invented the iron wheelshoe was a mule-driver on an army wagon, who saw the need of that kind of a brake when going down-hill with a heavy load.

A large heart and an unclouded mind seem to be the chief requisites of a successful inventor. The inventor of the hospital bed was a convalescent soldier who sympathized with the nurses who were exerting all their strength in lifting the patients, to administer medicine or food.

The soldier in the field has a marked advantage. His open-air exercise and outdoor living, his substantial, plain food and regular hours, and his general good health give his mind a clear track. He can think; and it has been truthfully said that "a man with a handful of wheat who thinks is worth more than a man with a thousand acres of wheat who doesn't think."

It is almost impossible to give the history of an idea, or to be sure of the antecedent causes for the inventive suggestion; and while soldiers have ever been great inventors, the traceable biographies are short of detail. The men themselves seem to forget that their humble lives, while they were thinking, are of special interest, and their biographers begin the story of their lives at the point where their great discovery ends, not where it hazily begins. If the full biographies could be written they would be of great importance as an incentive to the soldiers in the field.

He most lives who thinks most.

The soldier can think more. Technical books on any subject of interest to the soldier can be obtained by any soldier who applies to the National Educ tion Committee on Training Camps, or to the Young Men's Christian Association, or to the American Library Association. The books seem to be available now at any station of the army.

And what is needed is that the books shall be read by men who will not only read, but who will train their minds to think, so as to be able to follow up the benefits of the reading. What is needed is that the books shall be carefully read by men who will think beyond the books.

Here the man in the service has his great opportunity. When he returns from the war there will be a great need for supplies to rehabilitate the devastated

world. Commerce, manufacturing, exchange, farming, teaching, writing, and inventions will require many men and women. There will be a leap ahead, and consequently greater need of men who can adjust themselves quickly to the new conditions. The young soldier who as a soldier learns to use his brains, or the older soldiers who do not let the war keep them from training their brains, will find an anxious, hungry multitude waiting for their help when they get home. The men will be rejected and neglected if they cannot do the work, and if they cannot supply the world's awful needs, but they will be given every chance to win fame and prosperity if they show that they have the needed ability.

And the ability and training may come from some apparently humble beginning. The president of one of the largest banks in Chicago secured his place by the chain of results following his improvement in his handwriting when, as a soldier, he wrote letters home. That old Spencerian copy-book which he copied on a piece of board lying across his lap when he was stationed at a military outpost was the "Sesame," or magic opener, of life's great opportunity.

CHAPTER IV

THE CORPORAL'S BOOK

HOW one man, a blacksmith's helper, became, through study while in the ranks, a banker, a man not only of wealth, but of public influence; how another soldier owed to camp-fire study during the Civil War his advancement to the Presidency of the United States; how a youth, through study while in his private soldier's uniform, laid firm the foundations on which, after the war was over, he gradually built up great surgical fame, and how, years later, his skill enabled him most romantically to save the life of the officer who had encouraged him to begin his study of how to become a doctor—such are among the actual stories of soldier-study achievement; such are among the facts upon which I base my earnest appeal to the soldiers of to-day.

I have always felt a deep interest in the experience of a corporal who rose to affluence and influence through close attention to his books while a soldier, a story which is not fiction designed to bolster up a

theory, but which is a real story; a story not of fancy, but of fact; a story the more remarkable because in the beginning of his soldierly career there could be no such thing as the corporal's book, since he was so illiterate that he could neither read nor write. But while still a soldier he learned to read, and he not only read, but studied; he studied business and banking; and, gradually becaming known to his comrades and associates as "the corporal with a book," he attained his high aims after the war was over.

The corporal fixed upon his goal and never wavered; and that his steadiness and persistence of purpose were owing to his love for a noble woman adds to the nobility of the story, for it is a fine incentive for a man to feel that in winning success for himself he is winning it also for the woman he loves.

"What became of that corporal with the book?" was asked by a gray-haired veteran at a G. A. R. Camp-fire held in Minneapolis forty years after the Civil War. The old soldiers had been talking long about the painful monotony of a soldier's life when far from home, waiting, waiting, through the days and weeks of unexplained delay. The anxious, provoking, nerve-breaking, homesick days, with nowhere to go, no one to see, no marching, no fighting, no recreation; the days when one is an innocent prisoner, forced to think only of himself.

The gloom of the hours of idle and purposeless life colors his imagination and he imagines the approach of fearful diseases, he thinks the war is blunderingly

managed, that the soldier is a victim of political trickery, and he wonders if the folks at home will ever find his grave. The wretchedness of these monotonous hours can be found nowhere else save in a dungeon.

The experience is all the worse because these should be hours when one is laying up for the future. At the age when the young man's character is forming for life, when his mind is clear and his ambition strong, those hours are treasuries of wealth. But if he cannot use those treasuries of time or invest them for the future they are lost forever. Loneliness! Pain! Tears!

So the old soldiers sighed over those wasted years. "No loss is so great as lost time," said they. And then, with nervous shifting of chairs, they returned to the reminiscences of the corporal with his book.

A young blacksmith's helper, Jim Gessler, was of English yeoman stock, with a strong arm, a great heart, and a cheerful face. He was industrious, sympathetic, neighborly, and upright. He was so ignorant that he could not read, nor could he write beyond making his name just intelligible. But he was of a strong, brave, and unselfish character such as most easily wins the affection of wholesome women. He liked his porter and beer. He smoked constantly at his work as he sang lustily the old English folk-songs. He enlisted early in 1862, and amid the excitement and patriotic demonstrations at North Adams the young women were strongly in evidence, endeavoring to cheer the brave soldiers with songs, feasts, and decorations.

This illiterate youth was in love. And, strange indeed on the part of one who could not read or write, it was upon a highly intelligent school-teacher that his affections had become fixed. But he realized the temerity of his love, and not until the day of his actual departure for camp did he summon up courage to declare his feelings.

The young woman did not at once answer, except to tell him that she would make her reply before he went away; and so, later that same day, at the railway station, as the trainload of soldiers was leaving, she handed him a letter. When the letter was read to him, to his joyful amazement, he learned that she accepted his proposal and that henceforth and forever he would be her hero and that he would always be first mentioned in her prayers.

Over and over he thought about the letter, almost overcome by the unexpected happiness; and then he sewed it in his uniform, over his heart, so that the bullet which should kill him "must first go through Miss Parsons's letter."

Gessler's file-leader and tentmate was a young fellow from Worthington, Massachusetts, named Bates. To Bates, therefore, was delegated the delicate task of writing Gessler's first of many love-letters. Why we smile most at painful experiences cannot be explained. A lady falls on a banana-peel and breaks her umbrella, and the world giggles. So his companions snickered at Gessler. Those boys in his company, then in camp at New Berne, North Carolina, found

unmeasured delight in their gibes and practical jokes connected with that "love-letter writing by proxy." Gessler's soul was aflame. His sensitive heart ached and his hardtack was untasted. But fifty years afterward one of those comrades remarked, "If we had been as ignorant as he was then, we might be as rich as he is now."

Gessler was a sincere patriot; he loved freedom and he had enlisted because of his manly, noble desire to express his patriotic principles. He was engaged to a patriotic woman who wished to have him do his best for his country. She naturally desired to receive confidential love-letters, written by her lover's own hand, and she was made inexpressibly happy on that glad day when she received a note from Bates saying that Gessler wished to have her send him "a copy-book for writing, a spelling-book, and a grammar."

Miss Parsons years after showed that letter to her grandchild, whose husband was then one of the youngest men ever elected to Congress.

Of course, the books were sent, and a few weeks later trembling fingers must have received at the post-office window the first real letter sent by that soldier boy to his prospective bride. There are letters and letters and letters; but there are few like that one!

Gessler soon found that the soporific effect of the cigars and the beer tended to dullness, and he "swore off, for her sake."

One day his regimental commander, Colonel Lee, noticed Gessler deeply poring over a book, and he

remarked to Gessler's chaplain that "a fellow who is so intent on learning will amount to something"; accordingly he recommended Gessler's promotion, and the next week Gessler appeared on parade in corporal's stripes. All the boys agreed that it was a deserved compliment.

Gessler and Bates organized a debating club in the regiment, and then obtained subscriptions to a reading club which contributed small sums for newspapers and educational books. But Gessler was about the only one who took the matter seriously. The others all wanted recreation, and divided their time liberally between card-playing "smokers" and athletic sports when off duty.

But Miss Parsons wrote often to Gessler, and with the proverbial common sense of the Yankee schoolmarm advised him to "aim at something definite." He could not make up his mind what to choose for his life's occupation. He had been encouraged by her, as his studies progressed, to think of something in life more profitable and more intellectual than horseshoeing. Finally she decided the matter by expressing a faint hope that when he came back from the war her father, who was a cashier in a bank in Pittsfield, might get him a minor place in the bank. If so, they could make their home near the "old folks." Gessler wrote a joking letter to his old father, telling him of Miss Parsons's suggestion, in which he said:

She is a dear, good woman, and has much sense about some things, but I dare not tell her how she overrates me,

Poor thing, won't she be surprised when she finds what a stupid donkey I really am. Think of these great hands counting money in a bank! But, my dear father, I do feel that I can do something better than working at the forge.

Now this must not be taken that there is anything disgraceful about working at the forge or doing any other form of manual labor. The only possible disgrace lies in continuing in some humble condition through neglecting opportunities to rise. It is not only the privilege, but the duty, of every man to rise to as great position and prosperity as is consistent with honest methods. I have always preached the gospel of worldly success because I have always believed it to be in harmony with the spiritual gospel. No man need flatter himself that he is a good man merely because he refuses to advance himself.

And so young Gessler very properly found his ambition awakening under the touch of the ambitions of his wife-to-be. It was hard for him to realize seriously that he could by any possibility rise to what seemed to him the lofty height of a bank clerk. He scarcely dared hope, as he expressed it, with more of earnestness than jest, to get to be even the bank janitor!

But his ambition seriously awoke, and the more seriously because he was determined to do all that he could to make himself worthy of the young woman who, in spite of her education, cared enough for him to overlook his illiteracy. He wrote to her, telling her that he thought so much of her advice and her sug-

gestions that he would set himself at the study of banking, to fit himself for that possible future. Would she send him the necessary books?

At once, with her heart filled with joy, she responded. She did not instantly begin sending him technical books. She knew that would be a mistake for such a case as his. She first sent him a biography of George Peabody, the great banker of Baltimore and London, to interest him in the subject of banking and in the romance of personal achievement.

He read it, slowly and with difficulty, for he was still in the first stages of reading, and then slowly and with difficulty he wrote her that he had finished the book, adding the remark that "If George Peabody could do anything worth while, after drawing molasses in a country store at Danvers, I guess I can by hook or crook get out of the blacksmith shop at North Adams."

You see, Gessler had *decided* to be a banker. Two-thirds of the young men become second-rate because they do not decide early in life what their calling shall be. Years are lost in hesitation. But Gessler made up his mind and decided, and he set himself to carry out the decision. His reading and writing became by practice easier and easier to him. Following the Peabody biography, he soon became interested in technical books that his wife-to-be sent him, and as corporal of the guard he was often heard repeating the formulas of mathematics and the axioms of economic science.

The soldiers often ridiculed the corporal for "going crazy over money" when he was drawing only thirteen dollars a month. But he did not heed them. He kept at his studies. And seldom was a man more surprised than was Gessler to find that political economy could be so attractive as he found it to be when he entered upon the history of trade and finance. He bought a government bond and sent it to Miss Parsons as a Christmas present, and wrote out for her a long essay on the "Evolution of National Treasuries."

Gessler's increase of personal value was soon discovered and he was installed as an assistant in the quartermaster's office. His place in the company was filled by his tentmate, and soon, with the marching and camping, battles and hospitals, the company forgot the "corporal with the book" that they had so often laughed at; they barely knew, indeed, that on account of his books, which he had studied for the sake of his advance in civilian life after the war, he had won promotion in the military service, and that he had become a captain through his value as a man of accounts and aptitude for army business.

At length the war was over. Captain Gessler remained in it to the close. His preparation for the future did not lead him to leave the fighting until the fighting was at an end.

Then, on a June day in 1865 Captain Gessler and Miss Parsons stood before the Congregational minister at Stockbridge and took each other "for better or worse."

And among the wedding-presents was one which was to him of infinite value, for it represented what a prize an illiterate soldier could win, when inspired by determination and a woman's love—for the especial present was a notice that he had been appointed assistant teller at the bank in Pittsfield, with the promise of the full appointment as soon as he should become acquainted with the routine of the business.

Study in the hours of military leisure had carried him far, and he was to mount still higher.

Many years after the war, at a camp-fire in Minneapolis, one of his old companions asked the question, "What became of the corporal with the book?"

At first the answers were not definite. One had heard that he had left Massachusetts to grow up with the West. Another was able to add to this that Gessler had gone to Missouri, had become a member of the state legislature, and that he was living in St. Louis.

A World's Fair was then in progress in St. Louis and so the boys around the camp-fire said in unison, "Let us go to the World's Fair and look him up."

Go they did. From the Planter's Hotel they sent a note to Gessler saying that "some of the boys of the Thirty-sixth wish to call a minute to shake an old comrade's hand." It took only a half-hour to reach his home, a costly mansion on a hilltop, with gardens, lawns, groves, and drives, and with wide-spreading views of loveliness.

Here again they met "the corporal with the book,"

a magnificent man with white hair, broad shoulders, and cheerful face; and beside him stood the wife, who so many years before had successfully awakened in him the ambition that had made him what he was. Everything indicated wealth and prosperity; the home, its costly furniture and paintings, its statuary, and its great oak staircase.

Hearty were the greetings of the "Boys of '62." Gessler was one of the guarantors of the great fund necessary to secure the fair at St. Louis, and he was the largest stockholder in a series of banks which had loaned money on bonds to the Republic of France. A happy home, with five fine and healthy sons; and with love divine, unchangeable, eternal, in the hearts of the parents.

When the old comrades re-entered their room at the hotel, the elder threw his G. A. R. cap on the floor with a swoop and shouted: "Is not that a wonderful history? That is what has become of the corporal and his book!"

CHAPTER V

THE STRETCHER-BEARER AND HIS BOOK

IN this fascinating research after romantic facts concerning the soldiers and their books, one of the most startling coincidences—or Providence—occurred in London on September 18, 1907, when a very wealthy owner of mines in Utah and Colorado was taken suddenly worse after an extended tour of Europe for his health. A seemingly fatal cancerous tumor on the liver was threatening his life.

The millionaire, as a youth, had enlisted as a private soldier, at a war meeting held in the school-house where he was a teacher, and he soon rose to be a lieutenant in one of the Illinois regiments.

After the war success had come to him and he had piled up his millions. But with the millions there had also come ill health, and the doctors had told him to quit business for a time and do nothing but travel; he obeyed the doctors and sailed for Europe.

One of his closest friends was the officer who was the commander of the G. A. R. in 1898. This officer had also begun in the army as a private soldier, and the bond between the two friends was very close.

Before the millionaire sailed for Europe his friend gave him some urgent advice. "I know of a surgeon who may be able to cure you," he said. "Before you go you ought to see him. His office is on Madison Avenue, in New York City. I will give you a letter of introduction to him."

But the millionaire, dejected and downhearted, did not follow the advice, but went abroad without first seeing the American surgeon. Traveling about, over there, he grew gradually worse, and became so sick while at Bingen that he could with difficulty make his way to London, even though a loving daughter and a trained nurse were at his side. He reached London and was taken to the Hotel Cecil, and there he found that he could be moved no farther. The English surgeons held out no prospect of possible recovery and ordered absolute rest as the only chance of a short prolongation of life.

Then there came to the daughter the remembrance of the surgeon in New York whom her father's friend, the G. A. R. commander, had so strongly urged him to see. Her father was too ill to consult, so she took upon herself the responsibility of cabling him to ask that he come to London at once to see the sick man.

Now a great specialist in New York City earns a vast amount in a few weeks, and so the surgeon cabled back what it would cost to induce him to leave New York and cross the ocean.

The sum was huge, but the daughter did not for a moment hesitate. She cabled acceptance of his offer,

with the urgent request to take the very next fast steamer, for life or death depended upon his speed. And on the very next steamer he sailed.

It was nearly seven days before he reached London. Meanwhile the sick man had failed steadily and was very weak. The English surgeon who had been in charge declared it to be the positive opinion of himself and his associates that an operation could do no good and could only have the effect of hastening death.

But the New York surgeon was a man of will and judgment. "I will operate," he said, quietly. "I have been summoned from the other side of the Atlantic, and it is my professional duty to do the best that my judgment dictates. The patient will die if I do not operate. But his case is not so hopeless but that he still has a chance if I proceed at once. I will operate."

And so he operated, with the flock of English surgeons and doctors and the bevy of trained nurses—for no expense had been spared—pessimistically looking on, but anxious to help; for the American surgeon was a man of such dignity and confidence as well as of such swift skill that he had instantly won their respect.

Before drifting into unconsciousness under the influence of the anesthetic the millionaire had searchingly looked into the eyes of the American surgeon and had briefly signified acquiescence in whatever was to be done. But there had been no recognition of acquaintance; to the rich man the surgeon was but a

helper chosen by a friend to aid him. But to the surgeon the sick man was like a ghost rising out of the past—his lieutenant in the long-past army days. And to the lieutenant he owed it that he had ever risen in the world; to the lieutenant, who was now this wealthy man whose very life depended upon his utmost skill, he owed the foundations of his success.

The operation was long—over two hours—and once in a while the patient seemed almost on the point of recovering consciousness; twice he called out, sharply, "Send the hospital steward!" as if dreaming he was wounded in battle, and once he cried, "Send young Betsie! Betsie!" And the nurse who was nearest the great surgeon noticed that he turned pale and for a moment she almost feared that he was about to lose his self-control. And then, as she bent forward to hand him a needed implement, she heard him whisper, in awe, "That was my nickname in the army!"

The operation was completed, the patient gradually recovered consciousness, and shortly dropped off into a broken slumber. When he awoke he glanced curiously at the surgeon, but in a few moments he wearily closed his eyes again.

But next day the sick man was stronger, and he looked long and steadily at the surgeon. At length he said, faintly and wonderingly:

"Aren't you Betsie?"

"Yes, I am Betsie."

The sick man tried to smile. "I dreamed of you last night—or at least it seems as if I dreamed."

"It was not a dream, Lieutenant. I was right here."

For a long time the sick man pondered. "You were the hospital steward?"

"Yes."

Old memories were thronging back. "You helped carry me in on a stretcher at Corinth."

"Yes, Lieutenant; but you must go to sleep again," said the surgeon in a tone of quiet command.

The two men had not met for over forty years; not since 1863. The lieutenant had taken a friendly interest in the young hospital steward. He soon discovered that he was quite ignorant, but, seeing that he seemed to possess unusual mental qualities, he had gone out of his way to encourage him. Finding the young steward slow to believe that there was opportunity for him, the lieutenant said to him one day, "Study, and keep at it, and I believe you'll make a first-class doctor."

The steward replied that he was poor, and that, as the lieutenant knew, he was ignorant; although it would be the pinnacle of his ambition to become a doctor, he saw no way to gain that end or even to get the necessary preliminary instruction.

But the lieutenant persevered. "You have a natural aptitude for the profession," he insisted. "I have watched your ways. You can begin your first studies while you are with the army." And he saw to it, being a kind-hearted young fellow, that some elementary medical books were sent down from Chicago.

The hospital steward studied eagerly; he was fascinated by the idea of some day becoming a physician; he looked for every chance to get experience; and once, acting as stretcher-bearer, he helped to carry in the lieutenant, wounded, from the field.

The association of the two men was but brief. The exigencies of war separated them, and the lieutenant never even knew that "Betsie," as he was nicknamed, had acted on his encouragement, had used to splendid advantage every possible minute of his war-time; that his earnestness and skill had made him other friends; that, the war over, he had managed to make his way through a medical college in Chicago; and finally that he had removed to New York in 1871. Of all this the lieutenant had never heard, and now the two men had so strangely met once more.

As the days of convalescence passed, the surgeon more and more disliked the idea of returning to New York, for it was so wonderful to sit and talk, as the sick man's strength returned, of the days of long ago.

"You have saved my life," said the millionaire.

The surgeon smiled. "Without your encouragement I should never, myself, have really had a life," he responded.

"But, besides the encouragement," insisted the convalescent, "which only started you on the right path, you had the ambition which comes in the long hours of camp weariness to him who can fuse the ambition into definite action."

There was a long pause. Then, quietly, the surgeon

said: "There were times when it was very, very hard. When I was tired or discouraged there was such a temptation to go off with the boys and forget everything in a rousing good time."

Throughout the evening before the surgeon's sailing for home the two spent the hours together, mostly silent, mostly occupied with thoughts of the past and of the strangeness of it all.

I do not know of a more romantic example of the possibility of basing a life career upon what one may study in the spare hours of a soldier's life.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEGRO AND HIS BOOK

THREE colored men stood together on the stage of the Academy of Music, Philadelphia, in 1907, each of whom was an honor to the human race. One, Booker Washington, was the founder and supporter of the greatest enterprise for the practical education of the negro race ever successfully undertaken. In his humble home in Alabama he studied perseveringly evenings, and in the spare hours from labor manufactured wings for his great, natural genius. He was the friend of Theodore Roosevelt.

The youngest of the three men was Paul Laurence Dunbar, a poet of high rank whose early death robbed our literature of a wealth of English and dialect poetry. He was an intimate friend of William Dean Howells and was sweetly loved by white and black alike, and he took many unincarnated poems with him into the Shining Land.

The third man was a stout negro "home from Cape Town," who brought letters of introduction from his

personal friend, Cecil Rhodes. But though from Cape Town, he was actually a native of America, and his old acquaintances in America still called him "Sam." He, too, was a poet, and his compositions had appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. But he was the least known of the three in the United States, as his public services had been wholly in South and East Africa and his name was known in this country only by occasional mention in connection with the Boer War. And this biographical sketch must deal with him exclusively, as he was the only one of the three who had the privilege of studying a good book while serving in the army.

He was born in Mississippi and did not know the date of his birth. But he could not have been over twenty years old in 1861, at the opening of the war. His old father died at Corinth, Mississippi, in 1906 or 1907. We do not know the date of his mother's death, as he took her with him when he was called to Africa as a teacher. His master's family were kind people, and after the war, in which their plantation was destroyed and the land confiscated for a cemetery, he sent his old, widowed mistress money and offered to go back and work for her without pay. When he was in the service of the United States army his heart was ever unchangeably loyal to his old massa and missus, and big tears came when he heard of the death of a member of the family who had been one of his earliest playmates. His sympathy was abiding and

strong for the widow and daughters through the dark period of the so-called Reconstruction.

What a surprise it was to the Northern extreme anti-slavery workers to learn how loyal were the hearts of many of the former slaves to their masters and neighbors in that awful period. Old Confederate soldiers went home weak, wounded, disheartened, and often legless or armless, to find burned forests, lone black chimneys, garden patches covered with briers, and the old cotton-fields uncultivated. Those men who before the war had sat at evening on the verandas of their stately mansions and listened to the plantation songs of their numerous slaves, and who never knew a horny hand or carried a burden, had, after the war, to seize the hoe, follow the plow, and live on the most meager fare. Temporary sheds arose over the ashes of their homes, and white and black worked hard and late together.

But those brave white families who were compelled thus to contend with poverty and take the biting insults of defeat were made robust, intelligent, noble, and unselfish by that hard experience. That defeated people snatched victory from defeat in a nobler way than in war. They worked and toiled; they saved and sacrificed; they appreciated the value of home, family, and money; and they bravely accepted the decision of the God of battles. They became loyal citizens of the newly cemented Union; they forgave their enemies with a sincerity which won the love of all who knew them.

The battle with the earth and with hatred, with prejudice and political chicanery, was fierce and long. But the contest developed muscle, brain, self-control, and Christian character until to-day there is no finer people in the civilized world than the white race of the Southern states of the Republic. Their statesmen control the national affairs and their enterprise commands the homage of the intellectual, commercial, and religious world. It is no misfortune to be born poor, or to be reduced to poverty by uncontrollable misfortune, provided the dignity of the soul remains undisturbed and the will be unbroken.

Out of the four thousand five hundred of the millionaires of the United States more than thirty-nine hundred of them were poor boys, and at least nine hundred of them were private soldiers in the Civil War. The study of their biography reveals the almost universal fact that they carried a book in their pockets to study in spare moments.

But the white people of the great American Republic climbed not alone. They drew up with them many of the colored people. The story of this negro boy, which is herein recorded, will sound, in the way we state it, like the composition of some romance-writer. But that should not detract from the reader's interest. This account is set down from well-established facts.

The colored boy, Sam, appeared one morning at a captain's tent at Newport, North Carolina, in the winter of 1863. He was ragged and awkward, speak-

ing the strongest Southern dialect. He stood at the headquarters with his torn hat in his hand, and, bowing low, asked, "Does dat yer cunnel want a boy?"

The colonel did want a boy and the young servant was installed forthwith at headquarters at a salary of ten dollars a month and army rations. Sam was a clown by inheritance, not by cultivation. He called himself a "contraband of war," and did not smile when he said he intended sometime to be "promoted over General Butler." But his lips were thick, and when the boys ridiculed those ridiculous features he said, "But yer oughter see dis yere brain!" He was like the negro President Lincoln described when he said that "a piece of charcoal would make a white mark on him."

Sam had discovered somewhere an old primer and speller combined, and it was his regular habit, in his spare time, to sit outside the little fort on the banks of Newport Creek and scrutinize that torn book. It must have been a sort of fetish to him. He knew that it contained secrets of knowledge, secrets which were hidden from him; and he blindly stared at it, and pondered about it, and made pitiful efforts to get at the meaning of it. And, though only discouragement was his lot, he did not let the discouragement make him quit his examination of that book. What methods he used to pick up the needed knowledge, what simple stratagems he employed, no one can ever know. All we know is that he held to that book, and to his

faith in the book as a key to something far beyond him, but which he still hoped to attain.

It is said that the log-cabin school-house erected at Newport, North Carolina, by the soldiers of a Massachusetts regiment was the first school-house ever erected for the freedmen. To that free school came a teacher sent by Governor Claflin of Massachusetts at his personal expense. She was a woman of culture, with large body and large heart. She was wholly ostracized by the white natives and was compelled to take her meals with the soldiers during the first few weeks. Sam, still holding to his connection with the army, was a proud and hopeful member of the first class in "reading and ciphering." But it seemed hopeless. He could learn nothing. An example requiring the total sum of 2 and 2 and 3 was too much for him; and three months of daily attendance found him still enduring disgraceful defeats in his attempts to master the alphabet. He could remember A and X, but D and F were out of the reach of his intellect. The teacher finally induced an army officer to persuade Sam to leave the school, but he still held on to his old primer with a tenacity that was comical and pathetic. The war, to Sam, was a constant fight to conquer that book.

When the war closed, Sam, by some means, drifted into the Raleigh Institute, another of Governor Claflin's schools, at Raleigh, North Carolina. The Reverend Doctor Pierce of Newton, Massachusetts, was the principal. Doctor Pierce soon concluded that

Sam could not learn anything worth while, but permitted him to "sit around in the classes" until he could find work.

One day in 1867 Sam rushed into Doctor Pierce's office, swinging his hands and shouting as if insane. The frightened principal had much difficulty in calming Sam enough to get an answer, when he asked, "What has happened?"

Sam flung the old leaves of the worn-out primer on the desk and shouted: "Marse, Marse, I kin read! I kin read!"

Doctor Pierce took the primer and pointed out some words, and the young fellow could actually spell many of them. He could make out the sense of much of the reading exercises under the columns of words in the speller.

The astonished principal exclaimed, "What has happened to you, Sam?"

The young colored man squeezed his head between his hands and shouted, as the tears came: "I dunno, Marse, I sure dunno! But sumpin or uver has broke!"

Yes, it was true; something had broken and had released that brain. Sam could soon learn faster than his precocious classmates.

The great majority of the great men of the world were dull boys. Learning came slowly and with hard labor. The conspicuous examples of Webster, Lincoln, Walter Scott, Motley, Vanderbilt, and so many others whose most trustworthy biographers mention their early dullness, give great encouragement to the slow

mind of any soldier student. The slow mind retains information the longest and is the most logical and efficient. Precociousness in early years is always dangerous. The most brilliant minds, also, like that of Elihu Burritt, may open suddenly and late in life.

Sam's sudden awakening to intellectual life was not a rare occurrence among persevering students. *Perseverentia vincit*—Perseverance conquers.

Sam appeared to be able to learn at a glance, and soon left his class behind. He was eccentric and unusual in his use of his learning, and was often the most humorous when he was the least conscious of it. Even Jefferson Davis's daughter laughed heartily at the poem Sam composed about the President of the Confederacy at that period after the war when the colored people in their prejudice laid most of the blame for their slavery at his door. Only one verse of that poem is here recalled, as a sample of Sam's early flashes of poetical skill.

> If de debbil do not ketch
> Jeff Davis, dat Confederit wretch,
> An roas' and frigazee dat rebel,
> What am de use ob any debbil?

Sam's intellectual achievements led Doctor Pierce to send him to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he studied in a business college for a year or two, and then he was sent out to Liberia. Through this came his connection with other parts of Africa and with the English. And when he stood, with the other two

great colored Americans, at the Academy of Music, as above stated, he was introduced by Doctor Pepper as one who was receiving the largest salary of any negro in the civil service of the English government. His success, as poet and government official, had come through his intense devotion to his book while he was a peculiarly dense and ignorant soldier-servant.

CHAPTER VII

THE CAVALRYMAN AND HIS SUMS

I SHALL follow the story of the negro and his book with a story which represents almost as great a contrast as can be made, considering the types of men and mentality concerned. But the stories are alike in pointing out the opportunities of camp life for study.

This is the story of a great British general and of how he began his career. And it is a story of the British army, instead of the camps and armies of our own land. And this British story can itself best be told by placing before you two contrasting scenes which show how bewilderingly romantic life can be.

If the soldier of whom I am now to write were not a man of world-wide fame or one on whom a mighty empire has leaned heavily in this great World War, the reader might surmise that this sketch was an imaginative story, a mere fairy-tale. But all the civilized world knows that these two pictures are true to real life.

The first scene is placed in front of the barracks occupied by a British regiment of cavalry. The year is 1880. A Scotch private soldier is sitting on a bale

of hay, holding his horse by the bridle. For his regiment it is a rest time. The men have been drilling hard and both man and beast are tired. Far down the parade-ground other regiments are rushing through practice charges on an imagined enemy.

The young soldier had enlisted at sixteen years of age, having a desire to "earn his own living." His family were poor farmers, without wealth, fame, or learning. He had no political influence and had no hope of purchasing a commission. He was only a humble, half-enslaved private of the English army. In no army on earth was the condition of a private more hopeless. Six years of dumb obedience often left a soldier at the end of his service narrower in mental vision than at his enlistment. Great and helpful changes must have been made in the more democratic laws and customs of the English army since 1880.

On the day to which we refer an army officer was called by another officer to look at that private sitting on the hay. The young soldier did not notice them. He was too deeply absorbed in a small book to hear anything but the expected bugle-call. The bridle-strap was wound around his hand. The book lay on his lap and he leaned his head upon his open hand. He had become accustomed to use his free time for study.

The officer whose attention was called to the picture said, in a speech delivered in Edinburgh in 1904, that "the scene, with the little Scotch lad for the center, has never grown dim in all the years. I can see him at this moment. The contrast between the peaceful,

studious calm in the soldier's position and the field of warriors about him was most entertaining. Yet I did not for a moment hold the thought that the picture contained a prophecy of great things for England."

The second picture is shown in a palatial apartment in London, at the headquarters of the British army, and the year is 1917.

There are twelve men at a long table. At the head of that table, presiding over one of the most important councils that ever decided the fate of nations, was the British Imperial Chief of Staff, General Robertson. With the dignity of a great soldier and with the prestige of being, after Kitchener's death, England's greatest military organizer, there sat that soldier boy of the other picture. Thus high had he risen! See what, even under the most adverse circumstances, a soldier can do with the aid of a book! He had lived down the curse, so bitter in that army years ago, of being born a plebeian; he had met with silent contempt the slurs of his titled superiors; he had often declined invitations to feasts where he would have been unwelcome; he had given his mind to study; and here was the result.

Writers have delighted to tell many anecdotes of his social trials when his steady advance on his merits had placed him on an equal plane in the army with the sons of the nobility. Several times some young nobleman was promoted over him for social or political reasons. But the majesty of his mind and the wealth of his learning actually compelled old England

to call him up into the place which only a really great general could fill.

When the English sat in darkness through the nights for fear of German shells from the sky, and when the vast population along the eastern shore of England trembled as they heard about possible invasions and of predicted bombardments, they turned almost unanimously to this great commander, General Robertson, as to the only one who could protect them.

The soldier with a book held for a short time, according to the London *Telegraph*, "greater power than the King." But great as have been his achievements in war, his greatest influence upon the British army is in the plain fact that he has shown what a peasant's son and a private soldier can do; he cleared away all bad habits and gave himself persistently to study on the march or in the camp.

The fact that this record is made in this volume for the perusal of the soldiers in the great American army is only one of the smallest signs of his power; and yet here it will induce the common soldier, as well as the officer, to see that search for useful knowledge and patient sacrifice of present frivolities open the road to the highest and happiest stations.

> It is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
>
> The mind is its own place;
> And in itself can make a hell of heaven or a
> heaven of hell.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COOK AND HIS STUDIES

THE boys of the Fourth Iowa Battery probably never forgot the day the cook-house "blew up." The entire Seventeenth Army Corps wore a smile for a week. Cook Archibald, who caused the uproar in the cook-house and in the camps, afterward related the story to Alexander Stephens in the lobby of the House in Washington, when both were members of Congress. General Logan often used the incident in his public speeches in Illinois and Iowa at the meetings of the veterans of the war.

Archibald was only eighteen years of age when he enlisted. He had left school several years before to help his father, who had been crippled by the fall of a tree. He was not an unusual genius, but he felt keenly the loss of an opportunity to go to college. He had a natural bent toward mechanics and the sciences, and in early childhood had shown such a proclivity for the solving of riddles and puzzles that he was always placed under a handicap to give the other boys and girls a chance when they had a game or contest

in the evening sports. But Archibald had abandoned all expectation of gaining a college education when he took upon himself the responsibility for a frontier farm and his crippled father and the family. And then came the war.

His good old aunt (bless her!) lived in the suburbs of Chicago. Her dear, dear old-maid motherhood made her practically the mother of scores of young people. She was a Deborah, a Dorcas, and a Martha of Bethany. The elder McCormick, who manufactured the first successful mowing-machines, wrote to her that she, as the matron of scores of orphaned children, put to shame the overworked mothers who toiled themselves into the grave in taking the care of two or three of their own children. Grand old maids! What blazing effulgence gleams from their lives! Self-sacrificing Sisters of Charity without the garb, who have crowded their empty hearts with the love of afflicted little ones born of other mothers! A volume might well be devoted wholly to her obscure biography. Archibald's successful career is only one item of her history.

When Archibald enlisted, after the neighbors had pledged themselves to take care of the farm and of his parents and his only sister, that noble aunt wrote to him frequently and seems never to have neglected her hobby of self-education. There was no place in her soul for an institutional aristocracy which shuts the doors of the professions to all who have not loitered in some aristocratic school for a certain number

of hours and paid a high tuition fee. She, in her democratic Americanism, believed in the reward of merit and in keeping open the doors of every profession to those who were the best fitted for it, no matter where or how they obtained their knowledge. She felt that men and women should be promoted to places of responsibility and honor through what they actually knew, and not on account of the number of years in which they had attended some favored institution.

So she wrote to Archibald to cling to the idea that he could continue to learn much by his own personal study. And when he wrote discouragingly in reply that for a time he could do nothing, but that he hoped to take up studies once more "after the war," his pessimism drew instant fire from the affectionate woman. She told him that "procrastination was the thief of time" and urged him to believe that if he would be really a patriot he should fit himself while in the field for better citizenship when he should get home.

The aunt sent Archibald several books for his general encouragement, such as:

. *Self-Help*, *Home Training*, *Pleasant Ways of Science*, *History of Inventions*, and *Successful Men.* But the one book above all the others which impressed him was *The Lives of Our Great Pioneers*, for it told of the successes of self-instructed men.

He was so fascinated by these life histories that when, in one of her letters, his aunt set before him the examples of Robert Boyle, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Young, Count Rumford, Michael Faraday,

and James Clerk-Maxwell, he at once wrote to a teacher in St. Louis for books regarding those men of science. The order could not be filled complete and the *Life and Works of Sir Humphry Davy* was substituted for one volume ordered.

That book, thus sent to him at camp, gave Archibald a vision of chemical wonders which set his heart on chemistry as his life-work. At Rome, Georgia, after a wound at Resaca, he began systematic study in his tent. Henceforth there were no more dull or dreary hours for him in the army!

Like Edison and Lavoisier, he had no apparatus for his experiments—nothing but rude dishes, old tin cans, and broken crockery—but somehow he made them answer. Young soldier that he was, he would have been vastly encouraged could he have known of a remark once made by that greatest of all soldiers, Napoleon. For an experiment was to be conducted before Napoleon; and the man of science who was in charge, slow-witted as many a man of technical teaching so often is, complained that he could not go ahead because he had no mortar and pestle, whereupon Napoleon was instantly in a heat of impatience. "Remember, sir," he said, sternly, "that every table-top is a mortar and every chair-leg a pestle!" Napoleon would have approved highly of the makeshift experimental apparatus of our young soldier.

The text-book that he first obtained was far in advance of an unaided beginner. But he enjoyed the problems which chemistry is ever holding out to its

charmed followers. The first thing he learned was the composition of gunpowder; and the caisson of his battery always had that chemical in full supply. His text-book seems to have been Werner's *First Lessons in Chemistry*. Then, as now, the self-helping beginner had a great advantage over such great men as Watts and Stephenson, for they had no primer or guide. Now books can be secured through the religious, patriotic, or fraternal organizations which will introduce the thoughtful student to nearly every field of investigation.

The student who can attend a college or university will wisely do so, because there he can get such instruction and such books as enable him to begin where others left off, and thus to save much time. But that great advantage is often wholly lost by the disposition of students to think only in the text-book and thus lose the all-important stimulus to independent thinking. Unless a student obtains in college a decided inclination to go on after graduation into advanced investigation or work, his college instruction is largely a loss of time. There is, of course, something in the enlarged field of thought and in the enjoyment which comes from the possession of college culture. But the patriotic and useful citizen who would be of service to mankind must have an enterprising love for original research. The student outside of the halls of an institution of learning is often the most successful man in practical life. He gets mental strength; he gets self-reliance; and his knowledge is more certain. Hence he

will not stop with the text-book, but will still be a student when he is dying. Self-made men, whether inside or outside of college, are the framework of civilized society. Such a man was Archibald. He was only a cook in the army. But he was also a persevering seeker after truth in nature. He was afterward robbed of two great inventions in guncotton and in safety methods for manufacturing dynamite, but he was nevertheless a great benefactor.

But we must get back to his army days and to the explosion that touched the risibles of an army corps.

For Archibald, who had probably been selected as cook because his captain noticed his readiness with mixtures and fluids, had obtained from a plantation an old cook-stove as contraband of war. He used it not only for cooking, doing his very best with it for this purpose, but for what was more important to him, his experiments.

One day he was mixing and heating something that he knew very little about, and his small knowledge was the very thing that made him go ahead so confidently. Nitroglycerin, as Archibald afterward ruefully confessed, was one of the ingredients, and he was proceeding joyously on his investigating way when suddenly there came a mighty explosion and his beloved stove vanished in a thousand pieces. That he was himself unhurt was a miracle of which, in those moments of excitement, he did not stop to think. He only knew that his stove had vanished, that his precious experimental mixture had disappeared, and

that the camp was in wild excitement through the explosion of what, in the first moments of excitement, was supposed to be some "infernal machine."

Privately the officers laughed at the catastrophe, when they came to understand what had happened, but they also respected the depth of Archibald's grief over the loss of the stove. They had grown to appreciate this private soldier who cooked so well and who studied and experimented so patiently; and although, for disciplinary reasons, he was put in the guard-house, it was only for twenty-four hours. The corporal of the guard loved to tell, even years afterward, how he pleased the "boys" by smuggling in to Archibald a lot of nice eatables from the sutler's tent.

For Archibald had made himself loved. First, he did, according to the best that was in him, the duty in front of him—which happened to be army cooking. Secondly, he carried on to the best of his ability his studies in chemistry. And that he did not forget how to make one line of thought and experiment supplement the other is shown by the fact that when, a half-century later, he made a strong plea, in the Senate of the state of Washington, in favor of introducing household science and agriculture into the courses of the state university, he was able to give a clear scientific statement of the chemistry of digestion and the nutrimental value of cereals for men and cattle. You see, he had kept on learning throughout year after year. And at the time of making the speech to which I have just referred he owned a farm so big that the furrows

in one of the fields were over two miles in length in a straight line.

Inventor, farmer, legislator, good citizen—all this future was his because when a private soldier detailed as a cook he was influenced by his aunt not to neglect his time, and so bent his entire energies on definite study.

CHAPTER IX

THE REPORTER AND HIS BOOK

YEARS ago, two young men were reporting the Harvard-Yale boat-race on the lake at Worcester, Massachusetts. They were both employed by the New York *Tribune*, but the younger man of the two was in full charge of the work. The older man was a college-bred scholar and a graduate of a leading law-school. The younger man had only a common-school education, but he had worked night and day and he had carried books in his pocket for study until he was a reporter of unusual excellence. The two men were intimate friends, but the younger man was the leader.

The hills for miles around the lake were black with people and conveyances. Notables from all parts of the country were there. Bands, flags, streamers, tents, processions, canoes, and yachts came into sight and disappeared. All seemed a bewildering jumble. Newspaper reporting is in itself a university training, and of that university the younger man was certainly an efficient scholar.

The *Tribune* the next morning gave a page to the

race and the work of both reporters was there. But the elder correspondent compared what he and his younger friend had done and threw away the paper in shame; he even felt a sense of guilt when he accepted his pay.

Afterward, when the younger man was the private secretary to the Governor of Massachusetts, and was in fact the able "business manager of the Commonwealth," as he was termed, the elder reporter, interviewing James T. Fields, had occasion to refer to the brilliant secretary at the State House, and asked Mr. Fields how he could account for h s phenomenal success; whereupon the old publisher, the friend of Sumner, Longfellow, Motley, and Holmes, said, "He learned that when he carried a gun!" John B. Gough also said of him that "In the war he was a general in a private's uniform."

There lay the secret of that man's success. He read good books when a private soldier. He did not waste his time. He was true to himself, consequently true to his family, to his church, and to his country.

More years passed, and an experienced publisher of Boston began the publication of a new daily in that city. Such an undertaking is a hazardous enterprise even when unlimited capital is ever on draft. That daily, too, was soon in difficulties which seemed to its stockholders insurmountable. The newspaper owners in Boston felt that there was only one man who could save the publication and "snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat." That man was the efficient secre-

tary to the Governor. He was urged long and hard to undertake the difficult task. His friends prophesied failure, and some of the competitors smiled at the imagined future collapse. But he had "learned something when he carried a gun," and his skill and faith won the most remarkable business and journalistic success in the city's history. Wealth, honor, influence for good, came to the young hero, and that great Boston newspaper, now largely his property, is still under his management, and he is recognized as one of the generals of journalism. And all because of his self-training when he was a private soldier.

The writer is here reminded of a Congressman, chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives at Washington, who brought out one day from his desk several worn old books which he had taken with him to the army when he enlisted in the United States service in 1861. Those books, he said, soberly handling them, had been the solace of his dull days in the war, and had laid the foundation for that useful knowledge of economics and social science which led him to success.

The soldiers of 1861–65 were much encouraged by their devotion to Abraham Lincoln, who was a most conspicuous example of a self-educated man. So encouraging was his noble struggle against poverty that thousands of poor boys who had no funds with which to support themselves at school were inspired by his success to educate themselves by hard study at home.

The democratizing of education was a great agency

for the perpetuation of the American idea of self-help and individual independence. The Rileys, the Edisons, the Mark Twains, the Schwabs, the Cannons, the generals, poets, and authors, who made so remarkable the years following the war, were welcomed by the American public with especial favor. They were self-made, self-instructed, consequently entitled to double honor. The schools, colleges, and universities will ever hold the first place because of their special advantages, and the student who can do so will still seek their aid and their honors. But the fine discipline of mind and will and the increase of mental and physical strength gained by one who works at a disadvantage are often worth more than a college course.

Always one is finding examples for encouragement. And the examples are not always of young men. One soldier in the Civil War, a foreigner, who enlisted at forty-five years of age, could not at that time write a word of English. But he learned English while he was a soldier, and afterward he became professor of modern languages in a New York college and could teach seven different languages.

One sees, too, that a soldier's career, as in this case, is not to be deemed an end, but a duty to be done and a means toward an end. The good soldier enters the ranks to help to protect his country, and he plans for personal success after the war.

A story by one of the great French authors tells of a soldier who, a private in Napoleon's army, realized that he was ignorant, taught himself to read, write,

and cipher, and rose to important rank. Thus in every direction one finds cases that stand for the encouragement of the soldier.

I have always felt an interest in the career of a Vermont soldier who bore the extremely soldierly name of Wellington. For Wellington was always studying. He began as a boy, when he used to study his books while attending to the fires and the kettles in a sugar-orchard. He enlisted as a private soldier when the war broke out, and at once set himself to be a devoted student.

In this case the especial study was that of things military. He had no thought of remaining in the army after the war was over, but while a soldier he determined to learn, in particular, about soldiering; and so he increased his efficiency and kept his mind active and alert by close study of the United States army regulations, and his colonel soon learned that he was an authority on manuals and drills. Before long there came a very practical reward, for when his colonel was made a brigadier-general he saw to it that Wellington was appointed as his adjutant, so that he might have at hand the young man's special army knowledge, the result of his camp study at times when he might have been wasting precious hours in frivolity.

After that he was repeatedly promoted and never ceased to be a student. His parents, as it amused him to tell, had refused to give him a college education because they thought him phlegmatic and obtuse.

As a matter of fact, he had a mind of remarkable assimilative power.

He rode among the officers near the head of the parade at the mighty review in Washington after the close of the war, in 1865. He became a bank president and a director of the University of Vermont, and he was deemed by many to be "Vermont's chiefest citizen." And all this because of the habit of patient study, which, beginning in the boyhood days when a book, held up to the firelight, took the weariness from the waiting hours beside the maple-trees, and, continuing through his soldier years, remained with him throughout his life. His friends loved to tell of his being found, at one o'clock in the morning, in his hotel in Havana, when on a visit there, busily engaged in the study of Spanish, and quite oblivious to its being after midnight, and with no thought whatever of sleep.

And this soldier of the soldierly name, who himself rose to be a general, was notable not only for his own personal success, but even more for his genuine kind-heartedness—a kind-heartedness which was not only theoretic, but very practical indeed.

While in the army he was ever on the alert to distribute the mail and often personally overlooked its speedy delivery. Hearts still beat in the breasts of old soldiers who remember his interest in the efficiency of the mail service. Oh, ye civilians away on a journey! Ye think it is pleasant to get a letter from friends, and ye cannot think of anything so joyous as to have the postmaster hand you a letter from home! But ye

still know little of what a letter can mean to a hungry soul! Hardy, brave men, who have slept on the ground without a murmur; who have waded many miles in mud; who have had but one hard biscuit for twenty-four hours; who have stood defiantly in the open for hours as the shot and shell broke up the air like claps of thunder; who have stood for hours in the long line before the chaplain's tent, waiting, waiting, fainting with apprehension, for that letter from home! Only the soldier can know the full strain of that experience! It is impossible to adequately convey to the civilian at home how anxious to tearful anguish is the soldier for a letter bearing the familiar handwriting and the home stamp. General Wellington took a genuine interest in the soldiers' mail and was remembered with ceaseless gratitude after his return to civil life.

And, eager as he was to study, eager as he was not to lose any of his spare time, not to lose his free hours which he valued as more precious than gold, he always found leisure to be of aid to other soldiers. When he became an officer he often secured books and periodicals for the men of his command, and he persuaded many of the soldiers to begin to study systematically in order to prepare themselves to be of greater influence for good, and of greater earning power, when they should return home.

CHAPTER X

THE PRISONER AND HIS BOOK

WE frequently see, in the magazines and newspapers, pictures of our soldiers enjoying themselves on the boulevards, or engaged in playing games, or taking part in amateur theatricals, or practising as soldier orchestras, or sitting in temperance refreshment-rooms, or spending their time in some other form of amusement. And a good deal of this may be right enough. There is good reason for a certain amount of decent amusement. But the soldier should always be on his guard against the insidious temptation to spend all or most of his spare time in play. He must be ready to keep at study and work; he must be determined not to fritter away the precious hours that are his own.

It is easy for a soldier to devote himself so completely to alternate soldiering and play that he goes home when the war is over quite unfit to put his mind with steadiness upon civilian work.

One class of soldier has leisure in plenty, a leisure that is enforced—very much too much leisure. I

am referring to such as have been taken prisoner and who must needs have many a dreary hour. But they must strive to use their captive hours to advantage, and by so doing lighten the unhappiness of their lot.

Prison life at its best is a nerve-breaking experience and makes mental application most difficult. But the experiences of Northern soldiers in Confederate prisons during the Civil War presented the worst features of prison experience. Libby, Belle Isle, Andersonville, and Florence were terrible centers of the most heartbreaking experiences, but it is neither wise nor patriotic to recall them too fully now. The Confederacy had but little food for its own soldiers, and an honorable exchange of prisoners was defeated by commanding generals on both sides, although advocated by Abraham Lincoln.

I would not in the slightest degree recall those terrible scenes of suffering, were it not to introduce the actual story of a prisoner and what he did, and thus encourage those who may themselves be so unfortunate as to become prisoners of war.

The private soldier of whom I am to tell enlisted at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1861. He was twenty years of age, and had attended school but a short time in a farming district of New England. He was a faithful soldier, performed his duties bravely, and was trusted by officers and respected by his comrades. He was captured in 1862 at Savage's Station in Virginia, when sick with a fever and lying in a field hospital.

On entering Libby Prison at Richmond, where he endured the most unbelievable hardships, he could do nothing for himself, and was often for hours alone, sick, on the filthy floor, or sleeping in rows—and sometimes with dead bodies in the rows.

But one day a comrade brought the poor fellow a slice of ham laid between the leaves of a small book. The book was coverless and torn, but the main portion of it was not destroyed. It was a text-book of botany. In it were pictures of various plants, and he began to look through the book for the plants which grew about his old New England home, for which he had a homesick longing.

It was a diversion which saved his life. Botany is a difficult science, and he found it especially hard, with no teacher and he himself too ill to walk. But he begged a guard for a plant pulled from beside the stockade and began its patient analysis.

The text-book was carefully written and the illustrations were many. It opened to him a new world. It was an angel visitor.

One day a sprig of flowers was brought to a comrade and the studious soldier piteously begged for it. But the other prisoner, whom despair had made selfish, would only let him have it in exchange for half a loaf of bread; whereupon the embryo botanist went without his dinner and secured the sprig of flowers.

A kind-hearted Confederate officer, visiting the prison, noticed his profoundly earnest occupation, and

gave him a pocket magnifying-glass, which made his outfit and his happiness complete.

With this a new era began. He studied his book more closely than ever, and when by some good chance he could obtain a plant or a flower he analyzed it with the most painstaking care; when interpreted by the book, it told him strange and beautiful things.

Young students may study botany in school for years and know less than he knew in a month. The long hours were made shorter; the prison odors did not sicken him as they did before he had the book; and his homesickness was dormant while he meditated on the classifications of plant life.

Home is where the mind or heart is. His mind was in the fields and woods; by fountains and rivers; on the snow-line; on the prairie; in Alaska; in the West Indies. His prison held nothing but the body. Lost in a most fascinating investigation, he grew stronger. He memorized or exhausted the information in the book, and continued to seize and examine every stray leaf or flower. More wonderful than the stars and nearer to the heart than pictures, science threw open its marvels of creative force.

It is impossible to picture worse conditions. The Confederacy could not exchange the many thousand prisoners. It could not clothe them. It could only supply half-rations. It could give no medical attention. The soldier had to discard his filthy clothing and wore no clothes but a ragged shirt. His bed was the hard floor of a tobacco-warehouse. He could only

sit up when he could put his back against another invalid's back, but his mind was as hungry as his stomach. No letters—no papers—no news! His mind, like thousands of other minds, was withering in his emaciated body.

But for a year that one book was his salvation. Finally, after he had been removed to the stockade at Andersonville, some crazed soldiers, in desperation, stole the worn leaves of the book to heat a tin can full of muddy coffee. It was a bitter tragedy. It was like the loss of his dearest friend. He shed many tears and longed for death. He envied the suicides.

When at length he was released, he was a cripple for life. But his mind was alert. He was a private in the same regiment in which the author of this book was an officer. He was, after the war, for many years a most faithful friend. On his grave this comrade lays a wreath and places a flag each Memorial Day.

That soldier became a gifted author—a man of sweet culture and a highly respected man of science. Being dead, he yet speaketh through his books from the shelves of all public libraries. Through these pages he is speaking now to the patriotic soldiers of the United States, who would to-day as willingly suffer as he did for the cause they believe is right. No one can appreciate Old Glory as he who has suffered long for it at the extreme verge of death.

I do not know of any case more striking than that of this private soldier who, a prisoner of war under most distressing circumstances, laid firm the

foundation on which he built a career as scientist and author.

And, after all, it was a prisoner, though not a prisoner of war, who wrote in prison one of the world's greatest books, *The Pilgrim's Progress;* and it was a prisoner, looking out through bars at an invading fleet, who wrote in that prison "The Star-spangled Banner."

CHAPTER XI

THE BOOK AND THAT CIGAR

THE kind of bravery which unflinchingly conquers a cigar may be of a different species from that which stands cool and firm when the shrapnel splinters the stockade or the bursting shells destroy the trench, but it is of a higher quality. Every man is his own worst enemy and no one is ever strong with foes on the inside. Tobacco, which is a solace and comforter to the old man, is a poison to the young man. But that phase of the subject is not to be debated or urged here. This volume is devoted to illustrations from real life, and the facts cannot be adjusted or changed to suit any social or economic theory.

Hicks was a private, too. He was born in 1838 in a suburb of Philadelphia, and enlisted in 1861. He was a mechanical genius and delighted as a boy in toy machines. He took the grand prize at the Franklin Institute in 1856 for the best watch-case put on exhibition. It was an achievement which called much attention to the boy at that time.

And at a soldiers' reunion in Pittsburgh in 1894

the following story of Hicks's "greatest charge" was told by the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Hicks was a smoker when he enlisted; but he began to realize, when he was not allowed to smoke on guard or on parade, that he had become the slave of a wasteful habit.

He was a keen thinker, inventive and critical. He was conscientiously accurate and loved mathematics. He took with him from home in his knapsack several new scientific pamphlets and books. He never tasted of liquors nor ate intemperately. But the listless, wearing monotony of the campaign had inclined him more and more to indulge in tobacco.

One day, when waiting for despatches as a messenger at General Montgomery's tent, the general noticed his pallid face and bluntly said to him, "Young man, you will die in your tent soon if you don't smoke less!"

That remark was a road switch for Hicks. He began to examine himself. On careful introspection he discovered that he had become irritable and that his mind was not in full working condition. He realized that he was losing the power of mental concentration, of application. There lay in his baggage a pamphlet in regard to some new discoveries in astronomy and he had not felt inclined to grapple with its mathematical problems. Once he would have delighted in the opportunity to study such a difficult science. But he had lost all mental appetite for such matters. He had deceived himself with the false assurance that he

could think more clearly with a cigar in his mouth. He now realized that his habit of smoking had made him too restless to think calmly, and that he could scarcely think at all without the usual supply of tobacco.

If Hicks had been a weak or cowardly soldier he would have excused himself "on account of the war," or would have tried to evade the issue. But he was made of the stuff which gives the will the strength of steel and compels every faculty to fall into line at the sharp command.

But he was dreadfully ashamed of himself. The question came, whether he had the courage to give up smoking. It seemed to be something which was too great for his strength.

Fortunately, an old uncle, living then in Vineland, New Jersey, wrote to him at this very time that if he would "study hard" he would surely be promoted.

The two thoughts came together, and that night in the wakeful hours he fought it out. Was he to lose all the benefits of his study and training? Was he to sink instead of rise? No! He determined to get back to his books. He was convinced, now, that smoking unfitted him for study, and he decided once for all to break the chains of habit which so clearly held him back from success.

That contest was no skirmish. There were mortars, and seventy-fives, and shrapnel, and gas, and wire entanglements, and mud, and rain, and airships with bombs! There is no fight so relentless or so difficult

as is the determined advance on oneself. There is no victory more hard to win, or more honorable to the conqueror, than is the capture of an intrenched habit. It is the most important battle in life.

Hicks leaped out of his bunk and, taking a fresh cigar from the half-depleted box, smoked hard and fast until it was half consumed. Then he laid the stump upon an old shoe and said, "I'll now be free or die in the attempt!"

When, the next day, he gave away the cigars which were left in the box and openly declared that the fight was on for final victory, his comrades made sport of his resolution, and no one helped him by having faith in him. He was compelled to stand and resist unaided and alone. Men who have never fought such a fight will smile at the seriousness of this account. But the man who knows the power of the cigar or cigarette habit will appreciate the large place so small an event is given in this book. Tobacco may be an unreasonable, cruel tyrant, and

> He who feels her brightness
> And yet defies her thrall
> Is the best, bravest conqueror of them all.

Well, the battle of Hicks with a habit came finally to a close, and the Civil War itself came finally to a close; and Hicks was able to face the world with the calm eyes of a man victorious over himself.

In the niche of a bay window in one of Fernandina's

noblest mansions, whence one can look out over ocean and shore, lawn, and gardens, is a glass case. It is cut plainly and is about six inches by four. In that receptacle is a half-smoked cigar. It is the same cigar which was laid out on that old shoe more than a half-century ago. The owner of the cigar has never parted with it. It has been his fairy, his mascot, his generous benefactor. It has kept before him his long struggle with that awful hunger for a smoke, and has made all other painful experiences seem trivial. He conquered himself. He made the victory complete. He set up an independence which no one could take away. His natural mental endowments became available and valuable. He could work with his hands and plan with his mind. He was a successful, wise executive. He was a natural general in private life. He had learned to command and secure the obedience of himself, and consequently he became an acceptable ruler of other men. The first duty and requisite of a successful general is that he rule himself with confidence and wisdom.

That glass cigar-case is a symbol of the great character which made Florida so productive. Hicks was the local hand of Mr. Flagler, and was the president of four banks, and he attributes his military promotions and his great commercial successes in peace to the books he studied in the army, when his brain was cleared of nicotine poison. Hicks once accepted a single draft from the Standard Oil Company for three million and seven hundred thousand dollars. But all

success is not measured in dollars. As the value of a good dinner depends on a healthy appetite, so Hicks's greatest treasure is in the possession of a clear and cultivated mind which appreciates the blessings his wealth can secure.

The soldiers in the present world war from the United States are so uniformly young men of sterling character for patriotism, industry, intelligence, temperance, and self-control that there is but little need of exhortation to clean and righteous living. Our soldiers come from the best classes of the most intelligent people in the world. They were not corner loafers, saloon hangers-on, drunkards, or libertines. While such characters may be found in the army, and when found may occupy the front page of unprincipled newspapers, yet the solid fact remains that cursing, slang, obscenity, and gambling are rare among our manly soldiers. The sensational speeches and articles of the extremists and the deliberate dealers in scandal which sometimes frighten parents and friends of the men in the front are so generally falsehoods that they have lost their influence. Not one in one hundred of our rank and file needs to be guarded by law from drunkenness or immorality. They are strong and conscientious men. That fact makes us sure of final victory. Nevertheless, the relation of another historic occurrence in the Civil War may be helpful as well as interesting.

A young student at an academy in Massachusetts enlisted late in the war, and fought out to victory one

of those moral battles of which we are now writing. His temptation was drink. He was never a drunkard and his family were among the most respected of the landowning farmers of New Hampshire. But he was desperately troubled with a tendency to drink, which threatened to drag him down.

In an address in Hartford in 1894 that soldier told, to a Y. M. C. A. gathering, of his bitter personal experience. He had seemingly inherited a yearning for strong drink, although no ancestor had the reputation of being an inebriate. As a child he had loved the taste of whisky. Thoughtless neighbors sometimes gave him a glass of liquor, which increased his longing for stimulants. But his pride and parental teaching had prevented excess.

But when he went South with his regiment he was detailed to guard the quartermaster's stores and the sutler's stock. There intoxicating drink was issued on officers' requisitions to the hospitals and officers. He often tasted of the brandy and wine and especially coveted the brandied peaches. It was a subtle and dangerous temptation. His appetite grew dictatorial and his indulgence more frequent.

One day his face and manner revealed the fact that he had taken an overdose. Then an old sutler from Delaware called him aside and told him of his danger. The sutler told the boy of his own disgrace and difficult recovery from the drink habit. He told how the appetite for drink had ruined many a boy who trusted himself too far. The old man even threatened the

young soldier with disgrace if it ever became known that he drank another glass of wine.

The young soldier felt the rebuke most keenly. He went into the barracks and prayed long and earnestly for forgiveness and strength. His most awful thought was, "What would mother think?" Many men would have run away with the battle half won and gone as far away as possible from the temptation. For some men that seems to be the only wise course. But this young hero said that he determined not to let some other young man take his work who might not be able to withstand the inducements to drink. So he braced himself, looked unto God for aid, and determined to be an out-and-out advocate of total abstinence. No middle course would do for him. He won, and conquered. He often advised those who came for liquor to be very sure to use it only "as a medicine," and then only "when no other available poison would do."

In the address mentioned above the erstwhile quartermaster's assistant said in effect, "This is a simple story to tell now, but it was almost a life-and-death struggle with me then."

It is an anecdote which the usual biographers would not esteem worthy of a place in the history of a great man, yet it may have been a greater victory than Vicksburg.

That young man rose nobly in life and became an immeasurable power for the uplift of humanity when, for a quarter of a century or more, he was the saintly

old dean of Connecticut's oldest university. Therefore this little personal glimpse of his army life opens to view a strenuous, honorable battle. It accounts in a measure for his love for young men and for his convincing manner when warning his devoted young friends against self-indulgence, and especially against the danger of strong drink.

CHAPTER XII

A SOLDIER AND HIS DIARY

IT seems to me that contrast ought to aid the effect of these stories, and therefore I shall follow the story of a cultured student who became the dean of a great university with the story of a youth who was a market-wagon driver when he enlisted, with but the slightest basis of education. And I am going to tell about his diary.

I have several times heard Ralph Waldo Emerson say that when he was a teacher he "liked to watch minds grow." If Emerson ever saw such portions of this diary as were published years ago he must have felt intense interest in watching how the young man's mind developed.

But that the young soldier did not regard his daily record in the army as having any special value is shown by the fact that he gave away the worn diary to the son of a comrade, years after the war, when it had slept long on a dusty shelf. The diary, which made a most interesting and salable volume, gives an insight into the intellectual development of a crude

mind, which is of special value to the uncultured soldier. It also gives hope to the many dull minds which dare not yet be ambitious to excel.

This soldier was the driver of the market-wagon and the garbage-cart of a truck farmer at Wilmington, Delaware, when he enlisted as a private. His education was limited to district-school instruction up to the age of twelve, when he was compelled by poverty to go to daily toil. He was not a regular reader, and he spent all his holidays fishing or hunting. He seemed to have had then no near family relations, and, on his own account, entered the service "more for adventure than from a sense of patriotic duty." The only change which I make in the diary is to use here and there a different word or sentence to make the meaning clearer and to condense in cases of useless repetitions.

Jan. 2, 1862.—Near Fairfax Court House. In my bunk. I have made a resolution, to open this year. I'm going to keep a diary. The other boys are doing this. I do not know what to write, but I am well, ate a good breakfast—fried pork and hardtack.

Jan. 10.—I don't find anything to write down. I'm too stupid to write a diary, I suppose.

Jan. 11.—Have a bad corn. Wrote home to Wallace for plaster. I can't stand this keeping still so long. I am dead tired of sitting around. Wonder what I can think about.

Jan. 21.—I am now going to school to myself and will be a literary dandy with a blue necktie. I wish that geography (ancient) would come. It is cruel to let us lay around here all the winter and the Rebs only three miles away. Guess they are as mad as we are.

The corporal was cross this morning. Been up all night. Had a letter from school marm at Bolton. She is a good girl.

Jan. 28.—Have found a book in the old plantation shack out here. It's *Emerson's Essays*. The captain says it is too heavy for me. I don't know whether he means that it is too heavy for my knapsack or for my brain. It has been a long time since I read a book. It don't look interesting; but I'm going at it. Some one must read it or it would not be printed.

Feb. 4.—Who was Emerson anyhow? Is the book cool nonsense or am I stupid? I won't ask anyone yet. I'll go back and take a line or two and ponder.

Feb. 9.—There is something to those essays of Emerson. I'm catching on. Wrote home to Bartlett that I was "reading philosophy." That will make him laugh!

Feb. 10.—I do wonder if Emerson was understood by his chums? I ought to have gone to college somehow. I do wish I could think out things! Must turn in and blow out the light.

Feb. 11.—I got up in the night and struck a match to read over the third line in the piece on "The American Scholar." We are ordered out with cartridge belts full. Guess there's going to be a hot time around here.

March 3.—I must write to Sam's brother about the fight, and how Sam died. The book Emerson wrote still helps me to fool away my time. I cannot get any other book. I wish I could understand it. I'll try again. That bullet bothers me. I guess I must go to the hospital. Who was Emerson?

March 5.—Emerson was one of those Boston snobs who tried to carry on a farm and no work. I must give it up, but I do hate to give up a thing I've started to do.

March 6.—I have bought a pocket dictionary. That will tell me what the big words mean. I am ashamed that I did not try to keep on at school.

(Extract from a private letter dated April 9th:)

I have concluded to take up Emerson again. I gave it up because I was a coward. When the boys laughed at me as the "philosopher in the clouds" or the "steeple chaser" I gave it all up. But somehow my thoughts are hungry for that book. I am decided now to learn Emerson's essay on the Scholar by heart. "Each day, a page," you say. I am so glad you take such an interest in me. You are a scholar and know so much. I give you my promise that I will study hard. I know that Emerson must be out of my range, for I am a small caliber gun; but I will go on with him until I get where I can select some simpler books. Don't make fun of me. I will take up grammar when I can. Please write to me again, for your letters help a lone soldier so much.

Diary:

April 12.—I am going to send you my diary entries after this. It will do for a letter and you may correct me. You are a good friend for me. Is it religion which makes you so good, or is it because you were born so?

April 13.—I have put into memory one whole page of Emerson. I am catching his ideas. I can see already that if I can get into the inside I will *love to think.*

April 14.—I couldn't get any time to study to-day. I had to clean up accoutrements and tent for inspection, but I'm growing. I can feel my mind grow. What a lot of great thoughts I could think if I could only open up my brain. I will sneak out to the guard-house to-night, where they keep a light, and get hold of some more lines of the essay. I am getting a taste of knowing something. I can hardly wait to learn more. I wonder if I can be a real scholar!

I will pitch in and swim or sink. I will never back down again. Good night!

April 16.—I have had a glorious day on duty and repeating Emerson and thinking over that essay. Oh! it is grand to think. I am deeply happy to-day. I will copy off on another paper and send with this some of the things I begin to understand in the essay. It helps me to remember, when I copy it down without the book. Tell me if you can read it. Write to me next time what you think about these sayings. Emerson must have been rich—rich—rich to possess such a mind. I am glad he says we can think and read even if we can't go to college.

I now skip two years; and it will be seen that he is still studying, and still thinking of the influence of Emerson.

June 1, 1864.—I want everything which I can get that Emerson wrote. I heard that he had a great poem on "Farewell, Proud World, I'm Going Home." I want that. I can afford it now. So send me any books you find. Of course, get them second-hand if you can. I am a new man. My friends won't know me, for I would not know myself. Can this be the same lazy loafer who enlisted at Wilmington? Is this the same world I lived in when I found that book? I'll pinch myself hard. Yes,—yes,—it's me. But before I enlisted I hated books. I would not go to school. I told you this before. But now I watch for a book as I would for Mother. Emerson says that the Psalms and Job are the sublimest things ever written. I must learn them. But I must hold in 'til I conquer this grammar and *History of Literature.* There is so much to learn. I could hear something at the chaplain's meetings, but he is a hard fellow to get near to. But I have learned one thing from Emerson which

will help much. I am going to learn something anywhere I get a chance. What a lot—awfully large lot—of time I have wasted,—sitting around dreaming when I might have been learning. This diary now is only letters to you, my dearest friend. Do you know that I am going to college? I am a long way from being ready for college, but where there is a willing mind Emerson says there are victories ahead. I wrote yesterday to Yale College for a catalogue, and for some instructions about preparing for entrance there. Don't you laugh. I'm going to do it. You shall be proud of me yet. They will charge up to me on the pay-roll a larger size of cap soon. But I mean it now. Horace Greeley says every American can get an education. Old Abe had to dig for his learning. I am going to do the same thing. I will swim or drown.

And here is something he writes in the last year of the war:

Feb. 11, 1865.—So you are going to Europe. I am sorry your health has failed so much. But you will get well soon I know. But I fear that I have added to your load with my much writing. My dear, dear friend I love you all I am capable of loving. Oh, these two years! I have had rough service and had to work hard, and my wound is not fully well. But in the barracks is my little library. I thought I would bring it home when the war is over and surprise you. But as you are going away, I will give you a list of the books I have read and marked in the margin. The lieutenant is calling them off for me:

Emerson	*Arabian Nights*
Longfellow	*Greek Mythology*
Whittier	*Great Orators*

Motley	*History of English Literature*
Abbott	*Elements of Chemistry*
Beecher	*Mind Culture*
Holmes	*The Bible*
Darwin	*The Revolutionary War*
Macaulay	*Moral Philosophy*
Naseby	*Home Medicine*
Dictionary	*Martin Chuzzlewit*
Encyclopedia (2 Vols.)	*Robinson Crusoe*
Walter Scott	*American Song-Book*
Uncle Tom's Cabin	*Army Regulations*
Ancient History	*Business Man's Law*
History of America	*Self-Made Men*
Life of Columbus	

We have shifted about so much I have lost a few books, but these have lifted me out of my old self. I see the advantage now of education and I have school books ordered for a regular course in academy and college preparation. Good bye! Good bye! my dear friend. I'll have to get a prayer-book and learn to pray for you, for you must come safely back.

Fifty-one years went in and out of that soldier's life, and then he arose in a great national convention amid admiring thousands, and in an oration of great power spake these words:

"American liberty is dependent on American education. Democracy without intelligence is a piece of dynamite in the hands of a child. Our nation is powerful and happy because our youth have been encouraged to receive the best information and culture. We, therefore, as a committee, urge on this convention

that the chief end of our labors should be to awaken in all our youth an ambition to secure a useful education. For, once arouse in an American the desire and ambition for learning, and he will be sure to obtain it. With American spirit and American opportunities no youth need be left in the darkness and slavery of ignorance."

Thus did the market-wagon driver of almost no education and of no reading whatever show in his own person, and by his own career, what could be accomplished, and what rise could be made in culture and leadership, by a private soldier who began with devotion to one book."

CHAPTER XIII

THE TENT AND THE KIND HAND

WHO, of all who knew the "Modern Bunyan," or who have read any one of the fifty volumes of his "purest, sweetest, most instructive literature," can fail to reverently pause and thank God for such a writer? He was so modest, so whole in soul, so Christ-like in his manner, so chaste in thought and word, that he wrote like the Apostle John. When he died in Philadelphia recently his going was like the "graceful wave of an angel's wing." He stepped out of a world he had made immeasurably better with a smiling farewell which was a benediction on the tearful throng of his numberless friends.

Born and reared in a little mountain village in western Pennsylvania, the "Modern Bunyan" was but a boy when the war began. He was at school in 1861. But his patriotic fervor led him to try to enlist, boy though he was, and he secured his uniform, but was refused on account of his health. His physical examination revealed a weak condition of lungs and heart inherited and aggravated by over-study.

The disappointed youth determined to go to the front in some capacity, and, barred from the ranks, tried to secure an appointment with the Sanitary Commission. But he was again disappointed. At last, after several rebuffs, he was appointed on the Christian Commission, which was an organization similar in many features to our modern branch of the army Young Men's Christian Association; but it was a new idea then and had but meager financial support.

He was a member of the Presbyterian Church and endowed with strong religious convictions. He was a brave boy, and did not hesitate to seize a gun and take his place in the ranks when the camp was attacked, for it gave him at least some chance to be an actual soldier.

He knew little of theology. He had heard the Bible read in home, church, school, and chapel, but systematic theology and exegesis were untouched riddles to him. But his occupation as an employee of the Christian Commission took him often to the side of the dying, to the beds of the wounded and sick, and to the teaching of a Bible class. He was thrown into association with young men who asked serious questions and he found that the soldiers of all denominations listened to his simple ministrations.

The soldiers in that war, like those of the war of to-day, were the most intelligent, patriotic, conscientious, and brave of the people. Soldiers of the Republic are not cursing, drinking, brutal, obscene, self-indulgent, ignorant daredevils. The great majority of

those young men were like the great majority of our army now. They neither drank liquors, nor smoked cigarettes, nor gambled, nor used profane language, nor broke the moral laws of social or home life. There are only enough of wicked and brute-like soldiers to make news items and frighten nervous mothers. The soldiers of the Civil War, as a rule, returned to their homes as clean, pure, and religious as they were when they enlisted.

Our young school-boy was obliged to be a cook, an amanuensis, a despatch-bearer, a counselor, a confidential executor, a nurse, a hospital steward, a chaplain—literally a man of all work. He was also at times a tailor, a shoemaker, a carpenter, a knife-grinder, a postman, and a doctor. His life was a busy one. He carried off the wounded in the midst of battle, he assisted the surgeons in the hasty surgical operations, he buried the dead, and he wrote home to the mourners.

A "Christian Commission" meant that the members were to do anything that was Christian; and that covered any good deed or duty from an entertainment to a prayer-meeting, and from the headquarters to the cook house.

When one thinks of the multitude and variety of the young man's duties, and of his conscientious, industrious character, which led him to assume any duty that presented itself, the fact that he could ever read a page is a surprise. But he studied much, and, like Beecher and Moody and Spurgeon, he learned much from humanity in action.

He had a creed, but, like the greatest exponents of religion in the Catholic and Protestant churches, and like the wisest of modern rabbis, he was larger than his creed. His heart was as large as the human family. He rejoiced with all who rejoiced and wept with all who wept. In an address before Meade Post of the G. A. R. in Philadelphia in 1893, as reported in the *Public Ledger* of that city, he said:

"I look back on those two and a half years in the army as the best school of religion I have ever attended or visited."

The religionist with the army who mixes with the men must be prepared to answer all sorts of practical and serious questions. He must indeed "give a reason for the faith that is in him." No wild theories can withstand the cold analysis of the camp. No sectarian creeds can find acceptance simply because they are old. Men think. They discuss. They see death near as a continual possibility. They wish to know what it is to die and see the proofs of immortality. They do not avoid Bible quotations and discussions. They are in earnest. They all wish to know the true God. The chaplain with a "holy whine" or a declaimer of sectarian bigotry finds but few listeners. The American soldier is intelligent and brave. He will face the enemy firmly when bullets hiss and shells explode, and ask about death and heaven without a tremor. Probably men wish everywhere to know about those facts and theories, but they do not say so at home as they do in the army.

It was in that school that the "Modern Bunyan" studied theology. He found time to study religious books because he was determined to find time. With problems of life and death, of living and dying, of the present and the hereafter, continually facing him, he saw the need of being more than a Christian; he saw that he must be an intelligent Christian, understanding the problems of which he had daily to talk, and able to explain the basis of his belief and the groundwork of theology. So in spite of his myriad duties, and of opportunities for constant work which he accepted as new duties, he threw himself into the definite study of theology, and determined that when the war should be over he would enter the ministry.

And at length the war was really over and he was ready to begin formally upon a theological course. He entered a seminary and was found so well prepared that in his very first year he was intrusted with the instruction of classes in certain branches. He was a God-ordained priest and preacher long before he reached the theological school. Man could only recognize an established fact.

Five of his best books were written from notes made in his diary in the army. They were *Week-day Religion, A Help for Common Days, Handfuls of Grass for Hungry Sheep, The Building of Character,* and *Making the Most of Life.*

The army life in that Civil War remolded religious life in America. Bigotry gave place to toleration, hatred to friendship, theory to practice. Then there

formed the ideas which from 1865 to 1890 developed into hospitals, homes, associations, orphanages, colleges, arbitration laws, and a thousand benevolent organizations which outgrew the churches and became the common heritage of all the people. The books, sermons, and saintly life of this "Modern Bunyan" were among the most powerful motive forces in all these concrete exhibitions of love and worship. The studious soldier became a great benefactor of the race, and all through his intense determination to overcome all difficulties, to utilize every moment to the utmost, and not to let the distractions of war prevent him from seeing clearly his goal and then proceeding as steadily toward that goal as did the Pilgrim in the immortal story written by the original Bunyan.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CAPTAIN AND THE GREAT BOOK

THIS volume is not written as a religious work, but it would seem incomplete without a statement concerning the great religious awakening which followed close on the conclusion of peace after the Civil War. Adhering, therefore, to the plan of relating facts in well-known history, the experience of one young man with the Great Book will not be out of place.

He was a New England student in one of the great universities and had acquired just enough of science and philosophy to unsettle the simple religious faith of his childhood; and like many thousand other students who begin to break away from their home influences he went to the extreme. His classmates called him "Lewnock" and his father nicknamed him "Bub." He was proud, self-assertive, and energetic. Soon after his matriculation he began to read atheistic books and listened with fascination to the debates in which the young men often denied the creed of his parents. It had all the novelty and fascination of a

new discovery and he was soon counted among the unbelievers in the Bible.

When his old father heard of his son's departure from the faith of his country church he was overcome with grief. Lewnock's mother wrote him a letter so soaked in tears that he could not read it. But the letter came too late. He was satisfied that his father's belief was an ignorant superstition, and he was too proud to retreat from the open position he had taken. He persuaded himself that it was his duty "for Truth's sake" to combat the Christian faith, and he tried to convince his parents that he was right by long dissertations on "the contradictions in the Bible" and on the consistency of the Buddhist religion.

The old president of the university called the young man into his home on the hill to talk with him about his foolish errors. But the president was so irritated because the green country boy did not accept without question his dictatorial statements on religion that he sent him from his door with a hint that he had better abandon his infidel silliness or leave the university. That exhibition of bigotry by such a man confirmed the young man's apostasy. The president was one of the greatest scholars and one of the most lovable characters of his day, but he was positively tyrannical in matters of religion. The student was careful after that to avoid public discussion, but he settled down to the conviction that religion was a sham and that "death ends all."

The adoption of that gloomy belief threw a black

pall over his daily life and the shadow beclouded even his outward appearance. He had been teaching music in a ladies' school near the university to earn a few dollars to supply the mush and milk on which he often made his entire meal. But the principal of the school told him courteously that she did not think he could understand how to render religious music with real artistic effect if he did not have a heart's love for it. So he began to be a martyr for his lack of a creed.

In 1862 he enlisted as a private, but was soon promoted to a captaincy in a new regiment. His parents and friends ceased to remonstrate with him, as the discussion only served to arouse anger. But his sweetheart wrote him that his mother read the Bible more than ever and "prayed daily for an hour for her boy." But his confidence in his position was confirmed by his observation that the enlisted men, Catholic and Protestant, so easily slipped away from their religious customs when meetings were held in the camp.

But one day in 1863 there was a fierce charge for the capture of a bridge on the Weldon Railroad, North Carolina, and a Connecticut regiment and a New Jersey battalion were sadly cut down with grapeshot. When the bridge had been taken the captain, whose company had not been under fire, went to the aid of the men with the stretchers and assisted in carrying out of the thicket the wounded and dead. It was his first sight of such a battle. Sickness of stomach and brain almost overcame him as his hands dripped with blood and his uniform was soaked to

the skin with gore. The faces of the dead, as they were turned up to ascertain if they were living, were so unnatural and ghastly that he reeled about like an intoxicated man. When he tried to wash himself and his clothing in the muddy Neuse River he kept saying to himself:

"If I had been killed in that charge, what good to me would my patriotism be? If death ends all, what is the difference at death whether one has done evil or has done good?"

That first scene in the horrors of war unsettled greatly the captain's religious position. But he held on outwardly until an event brought the great question nearer to his heart.

A young, boyish, innocent soldier was assigned to the captain's tent and to his personal service. That boy was a motherless youth far from his native village and among rough soldiers. But he loved the captain and the captain loved him. One day the captain was wounded and the boy exposed himself to great danger to reach his captain's side, and this deepened the mutual affection.

Now the boy was a persistent reader of his Bible although he well knew his captain's views. The captain often ridiculed him. But it did not shake the boy's determination to read the Bible every night.

Later in the campaign the boy was so badly burned in a blazing bridge, set on fire to keep back Pickett's celebrated corps, that he died. He had returned over the burning bridge, after our retreat, to get the cap

tain's extra sword, a gift sword, which the captain seldom wore when on duty because of its bright gold sheath. The captain had on his usual sword that day, and was in another part of the field.

The death of that devoted young soldier boy broke down all the infidelity and atheism of his college days; and later, at Kenesaw Mountain, when the captain lay helpless on the rocks, wounded and seemingly near to death, his conviction that death did not end all became absolute. His instinctive nature reasserted itself. He knew by the assurance of his own natural feeling that eternal existence was, like a geometrical axiom, a self-evident truth. It admitted of no debate or doubt; it was an axiomatic fact and as true as his consciousness of personal identity. As his faintness increased he asked, over and over, "What shall I say for myself in that Judgment Day?"

The captain recovered consciousness in the hospital at Marietta, Georgia, and never gave up his Bible again. Recently a party of old soldiers stood in the highlands of the Berkshires by the grave of that soldier boy who so devotedly saved the captain's sword, and they congratulated the captain on his long life in the ministry for so many years since the war. They praised him for the good Providence which had so prospered his work. But the captain said: "If I have achieved anything in these busy years I lay it down at the foot of this soldier's grave. All the praise belongs to him."

Thus, when the soldier is brought close to sudden

death, he must think, and the natural instincts will break the bonds of custom and indifference; he knows by the infallible testimony of his own soul that his real being is indestructible, everlasting. And when he seeks as an intelligent, brave man for information concerning that further existence after death, he can find it nowhere else but in that Book which the wisdom of the ages and the common conscience of mankind have made unquestionably trustworthy.

But the religion of the camp takes on a broad and practical shape, unknown among the conventionalities of home life in time of peace. It is more tolerant of others and more free itself. It recognizes a great principle, deeper than ritual or human organization; it finds itself firmly fixed on the principles so miraculously expressed by Abraham Lincoln, "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God leads us to see the right," we will also do our duty.

On a tablet erected to the memory of the greatest among the preachers who were soldiers in the Civil War is this quotation from his writings: "With the best words, truthful statements, kind intentions, reverence for each man's devotions, and faithfulness to our own religious convictions, we try to make clear to sincere men the truth of God." Thus the preachers who are soldiers and the soldiers who are preachers stand on immovable principles which appeal to every true soldier's conscience.

CHAPTER XV

SOLDIERS AND THE PRESIDENCY

BILLY, as he was called, was only eighteen when he enlisted in 1861, and his hardest trial was in parting with his oldest sister, Ann. The family were poor, as the father was a laborer in delicate health, and much of the responsibility for the maintenance of the family fell on Billy's mother and sister. Ann was a school-teacher and she took Billy wholly under her direction after he was six years old. She helped him in his high-school studies, and arranged to get him an opening to teach school when he was only sixteen years of age. The neighbors in the little town where he was brought up used to say that the mother and sister divided the family about equally when the sister assumed the care of Billy and the mother became responsible for all the rest of the family.

Billy was a slender youth, had often been ill for months at a time, and was tenderly nursed through his illnesses by the hard-working sister. When will the noble elder sisters get the honors they deserve?

The war came, and Billy enlisted as a private soldier. When he shouldered his gun and with his com-

pany went into the train the whole village, which numbered not more than two hundred people, surrounded the train to bid the soldier-boys farewell. Billy's parents were broken with grief and gloom and were crowded back in the rush. But the brave sister Ann forced herself along by his side and into the car. She had many words of advice, kept a smile on her face, and courageously told her brother "to do his duty and come home a strong and true man." When Billy opened his knapsack, as the train sped along by the Ohio River, he found a new book which his sister had clandestinely slipped in, on which was this title: "*Lectures to Young Men.* By Henry Ward Beecher."

During the first six months his regiment was chasing guerrillas in West Virginia and he had but little time to read. But he read and reread those lectures, he studied and pondered them, and felt deeply the loss of the book when a comrade to whom he had loaned it left it behind at Clarksburg. But the book had made a profound and ineffaceable impression.

One day when in camp in the Shenandoah Valley, Billy received a letter from his sister, who was then teaching in an academy, asking him to decide what he intended to follow for a profession. She told him that Abraham Lincoln was a self-educated man, and said that she thought Billy should study "something worth while" when in camp, and that he ought to begin preparing for the future.

He wrote to her that he could not decide as to his

life occupation, and requested her to suggest something. On the margin of the letter he wrote, "But don't advise the ministry, for mother has driven that out of my head by her determination that I shall preach."

His sister decided promptly that he should be a lawyer, for she thought he had just the right abilities. But to that idea he demurred, because of his sensitive nature. He had been "unable to declaim in school without a fit of sickness," as he put it. Then, too, he feared for his health if he undertook to study hard. But, as usual with a temperate, growing boy in the army, he was becoming more robust every day in mind and body. His sister retorted that the most timid boys make the most successful orators, and that he was marching "for exercise"; and she insisted strongly that he must have some helpful mental work in "his long, weary hours in camp."

Billy's regiment was one of the most active in the annals of the campaigns and lost heavily in men and officers in several of the great battles of that war. Billy was brave, intelligent, careful, and courteous to all. His sister persisted in her wish that he should be a lawyer, and sent him a book on evidence written by Judge Greenleaf. He appreciated her wise interest in him and set himself to study. It was hard reading. But the thought that it would be of use to him some day, combined with the lack of occupation for his mind at many dull periods, held him to the task. When he became discouraged and wrote gloomily of

it, his sister secured another copy of the book and wrote to him that she would "read with him," and exchange notes.

One day a major in the regiment, who was afterward one of America's greatest men, noticed Billy's devotion to study when off duty; he not only presented the boy with a *Life of Daniel Webster*, but promptly asked for Billy's promotion. Soon he was given a commission as lieutenant, and then became a captain, in which positions he found more time to study. His sister sent him a book on oratory and rhetoric, which he read carefully. Then he began to write out sample speeches and often wandered off alone into the valleys or mountains and declaimed to the trees and clouds.

He wrote out a speech to an imaginary audience on the subject of "Obedience to Law," which had a most romantic history. He declaimed that speech over and over until, as he wrote to his mother, "it was worn out" and "bagged at the knees." That speech was a fine composition and his sister was proud of it and sent a copy to another teacher at the Poland Academy. Indeed, that little oration, composed in the army, gave him a decided lift in after years toward the position which won him world-wide honor.

His studies were broken often, and his sister did not always select the best books, as she was ignorant of the law. If he had been guided by a librarian such as can be found now in almost any city or town, he could

have saved the year he afterward felt obliged to spend in the law-school. But he did get a sufficient insight into the principles of the common law to furnish him with an excellent preliminary knowledge of the profession.

There was a short period after the war when his parents still wished that he would be a preacher, but his sister's determination that he should be a lawyer helped him to hold to that choice. And while he was a religious youth, and a member of a church, his inclination for the law, gained by study in the war, at last conquered.

With the little he had saved and the help of his sister, who was earning a fair salary, he now gave himself fully to the law. His study in his soldier days greatly shortened his course and he entered on the practice of law early in 1867. Soon after he opened his law-office in a small town in Ohio he was invited to make a political speech in a village called New Berlin, and as he felt obliged to accept in order to gain acquaintance for his professional work, he consented to be "one of the speakers."

The triumph of that hour never lost its power upon his life's success. It was a complete victory. Orators of state-wide renown, and one judge from the Supreme Court, addressed the crowd before he was introduced, but all the listeners declared that the young lawyer's speech was in every respect far superior to any other address delivered that day. The forum was a wooden box placed in the road before the grocery-store, so

that the audience could sit on the front steps of the store and on the bank beside the road. The bartenders in the adjoining tavern shouted enthusiastic hurrahs at the end of the speech and men tried to carry the boy orator on their shoulders. The wonder grew, as it was related to those who did not hear it, how that timid young man of twenty-three years, without experience, could so deliberately arise before such an audience and speak so clearly and convincingly without a sign of nervousness, and with such force. A noted Justice of the United States Supreme Court who heard that address declared forty years afterward that he could recite a part of that speech.

This same young lawyer mentioned that address to the writer of this book when he was preparing the soldier-lawyer's biography for publication; he said that he had found he could use a large portion of the speech he had recited as a soldier in the lonely valleys of West Virginia. He knew he could not make a mistake, because he had learned it so thoroughly while a soldier five years before.

One morning in 1900 the National G. A. R. were to parade in Philadelphia, and the writer marched in that great procession. It was one of the largest and most inspiring gatherings of the old soldiers. The people of the city and the state had come out one hundred thousand strong to welcome them. When we marched proudly by the reviewing stand, near the City Hall, the platform was crowded with the human greatness of the nation. At the front of the platform,

a little in advance of all the others, stood our soldier hero. His deep black eyes flashed; he held his hat in his hand, and bowed with the grace and dignity of a king, but with the simplicity and smile of an American patriot. The heavens echoed back the acclaim of his comrades and the huzzahs of the American people. "The soldier with the book," William McKinley, had risen to be the President of the United States, and that day looked lovingly down on many an officer marching in the ranks who had been over him in the war.

It is not with the purpose of arousing impossible ambitions, nor is it for the mere purpose of offering pleasant encouragement, that I shall go on to point out what immense importance soldiers have been in the matter of the Presidency of our nation. It is something that every soldier and every citizen ought proudly to realize. It brings home to all of us that the nation stands ready to reward the men who go forth to fight its battles and who keep their minds and bodies trained.

I need not go back to early days and early Presidents. I need not go back to Washington and his achievements and reward, or to Andrew Jackson and his amazing victory at New Orleans and his advance to the Presidency. I shall begin with the Civil War, from which most of my stories have been taken.

But first of all consider Lincoln, who, when occasion arose, promptly shouldered a musket and went forth to the Black Hawk War. Next came Johnson, who,

although it is almost forgotten nowadays that he was ever anything but a civilian, was actually an exceedingly effective military governor, for a time, with the rank of brigadier-general.

Grant made a name for himself as one of the famous generals of the world. Hayes enlisted, was elected a captain, rose to the rank of brigadier-general, and also was advanced to the Presidency. Garfield had a brilliant military career and won the rank of major-general. Chester Arthur, who succeeded him as President, also served in the army; for, lawyer though he was when the war broke out, he entered the service as early as April of 1861, as acting quartermaster-general at the request of the Governor of New York, with the full appointment to that rank soon to follow.

Benjamin Harrison won distinguished honors and a general's rank, even though his military career was not so brilliant as that of his grandfather, President "Tippecanoe" Harrison. Of McKinley we have already spoken. Taft was not a soldier, but he won distinction as governor of the conquered Philippines, and then in the martial post of Secretary of War, before reaching the Presidency. And as to Roosevelt, his dashing military career is known to all.

Minnesota's great senior Senator in the United States Senate now was a private soldier and who as Governor of his state was often a help in time of need to those who were officers in his army corps.

It is simply amazing to contemplate how the peo-

ple of this country have rewarded their soldiers. And the rule applies also to some of those who were almost rewarded—that is to say, to Presidential candidates who won the votes of millions in competition for the high office. Bryan, it will be remembered, joined the army to fight Spain, and won the rank of colonel. General Hancock was the honored candidate of one of the great parties. General McClellan was nominated for the Presidency, and thus won the honor which is only next to that of winning the Presidency itself.

And when we come to consider other great positions, prominent in the public eye and in public estimation, the number of soldiers who attained them is legion.

The American soldier, therefore, can fight with the knowledge that if he is true to himself he may go on in the full confidence that his country stands ready to honor him. Napoleon liked to declare that every soldier of France carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack. We need not go to the extreme of saying that the soldiers of America carry potential Presidential victory in their knapsacks, but we may promise them high honor and success.

But the solemn thing for them to remember is that they not only owe it to themselves to keep their minds so trained that they may achieve subsequent success, but that they owe it to their country.

The entire manhood of our nation faces war. It is not merely that we are to raise armies, but that our entire manhood of fighting age is to be merged into

armies. After the war our country will have to face problems at present undreamed of, mighty problems that will test and strain the nation. And by thought and study, by good living and clear thinking, by keeping their minds in the finest training, our soldiers will prepare themselves, as civilians of the years following the war, to meet those problems and hold the country firm.

To "the soldier with the book" the nation will look for its progress and its safety.

THE END

DATE DUE

MAR 15 1971

WITHDRAWN
UST
Libraries

TAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

COLLEGE OF ST. THOMAS LIBRARY
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

136351

BJ
1611
C55